WHIPLASH SMILE

No4

£1

SPECIAL 'VIDEO NASTY' ISSUE

INCLUDES

CRITIQUE, COMMENT
AND
DESCRIPTION
OF THE BANNED FILMS,

ALSO:

THE RUNNING MAN
HOWLING 3
NEAR DARK
THE SERPENT AND THE RAINBOW
PROM NIGHT 2
GHOSTHOUSE
LA VISIONE DEL SABBA
PLUS NEWS, REVIEWS,
ARTICLES, LETTERS,
AND POSSIBLY MORE!

A BLOODY GOOD READ!

WHIPLASH SMILE

ISSUE 4, SPRING - SUMMER 1988.

WHIPLASH SMILE is a quarterly publication by, JOHN HILL, 29 SKIRBECK ROAD, BOSTON, LINCS, PE21 6DA.

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CONTRIBUTIONS, are welcomed, please enclose an SAE if you want your work returned.

VIEW FROM THE HILL

WELL here we are again, another season, another issue, and another missed deadline, the latter of which I apologies for - it was unavoidable this time round. I'm particularly proud of this issue, we took great time putting it together, and I hope you agree it was worth it, though the 24 page count will be a temporary one, back to 20 next issue I'm afraid. The actual content of this edition is pretty self-explanitory, so I won't dwell on that, but I will add that the video nasty outrage, and in particular the subject of censorship has very much raised its ugly head again since last issue, so this special edition could'nt have been timed better. What with the new government watchdog committee, a step-up in TV censorship and new laws prohibiting under the counter sales of horror films, it all edges us a step closer to Big Brother, how long I wonder before publications such as the one you are reading come under the Hammer? Possibly not long, as Fangoria has already come under attank from the Tories. What's next? A prison sentence for watching DRACULA ? Don't laugh, anything is possible the way things are progressing.

Still, it's not all doom and gloom, for thankfully there are still enough intelligent, sensible, loyal fans and film-makers out there to keep our genre going, in fact at the moment horror is THE most popular film genre, box-office is up, film production is greater than ever before, and the growth of magazines and fanzines covering the subject continues, at which point, let me thank all the fans, editors etc who constantly write to me, it's nice to know I'm not the only one into this stuff. Back onto the subject of films, as I said actual film production in our genre is very busy right now, and some particularly fine films are being produced, which we'll try to keep you updated on, so next issue expect coverage of a great bundle of new films including, RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD 2; OPERA; DEAD HEAT; PRISON; MONSTER SQUAD; 967 EVIL; BLUE MONKEY; NECROMANTIC etc. The last three there will be shown as part of the second 'Shock around the clock' bash held in London in July, myself and several of the WS team will be attending, so if you see a weird chap clutching a copy of WHIPLASH SMILE, come and say hello. As a fan orientated magazine, I think it is a good idea to give coverage of such events, so keep your eyes open for future articles along this line. Another convention I have been invited to, but will not be attending (it's in Baltimore!) is FANEX 88, held in the States in November, I was invited to do a speech there, which was a nice thought, but I will send some copies over nonetheless, to help WHIPLASH SMILE's colonization of America continue. We're very much an International publication now, and it's all thanks to you, the reader, for your support, so sit back, enjoy the issue, and keep smiling.....'whiplash smiling!'

See you again, in three...............

- JOHN HILL (EDITOR 1988)

Reader's Poll

RESULTS

Remember this?
You know, that sheet of silly questions you filled in between issues 1 and 2? Well anyhow, here are the results, and though this may not be the most accurate poll ever conducted, I mean c'mon, I put it together! It does however give a fair idea of the opinions of the readership of this publication, and I dare say the British horror fan in general. All returned surveys have been carefully collated, and the results have been compiled from the returned surveys, so although not as comprehensive as absolutely possible, it is as I said a decent guide.
The first list is perhaps the most important (and interesting), the answer to question 5. "In no particular order list your top two horror films of all-time." The results have been gained by totting up the numbers of times a certain film was listed:

THE TOP TEN.

1) THE EVIL DEAD (1982)

Very close indeed between first and second placed films, but Raimi's epic finally made it, and out of interest, this film actually appeared in a mammoth 75% of reader's top tens!

2) ZOMBIES - DAWN OF THE DEAD (1979)

As I said, a very, very close runner-up, and even though the majority of British fans have never seen a complete version it still rates so highly.

3) DAY OF THE DEAD (1985)

This surprised me, I rate this one highly, but I was under the impression that this was looked upon as a bit of a fall-down amongst fans, obviously I'm wrong, and I now feel vindicated for my comments in our first issue.

4) ZOMBIE FLESHEATERS (1979)

Yes, you read it right! It surprised me too, but it just goes to show the popularity of not only Fulci and the so-called nasties, but especially the zombie genre, also the highest placed Italian film.

5) TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE (1975)

About time we got to see part 2 isn't it?

6) HALLOWEEN (1976)

Re-affirms my trust in you guys, as this is one of my faves, and cast your eyes downwards, not a FRIDAY THE 13TH in sight!

7) A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET (1985)

Nobody liked the sequels it would seem.

8) EVIL DEAD 2 (1987)

Pulled only a quarter of the votes of the original, but still a popular film, the message would seem to be more gore, less laughs!

9) THE THING (1982)

Carpenter's second in the ten, and only other in top 20, his next most popular was CHRISTINE.

10) SUSPIRIA (1976)

Far and away Argento's most popular film, second Dimo flick in ten.

AND THE NEXT TEN WENT LIKE THIS:

11) RE-ANIMATOR (1985)
12) VIDEODROME (1983)
13) ALIENS (1986)
14) STREET TRASH (1987) : Where did this come from?
15) ALIEN (1979)
16) RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD (1985)
17) EXORCIST (1975)
18) LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT (1973)
19) DEMONS (1986)... So we do film it afterall?
20) CANNIBAL FEROX (1980)
Last word to the goreheads, and fourth Italian film in 20.

OTHER RESULTS WERE AS THIS:

FAVOURITE DIRECTORS: 1) GEORGE ROMERO; 2) DARIO ARGENTO; 3) LUCIO FULCI; 4) DAVID CRONENBERG; 5) JOHN CARPENTER.

FAVOURITE FILMS: 1) AMERICAN; 2) ITALIAN; 3) BRITISH a poor 3rd. also, 1) ZOMBIES, 2) MONSTERS; 3) SLASHERS; 4) ALIENS.

Finally, the questions regarding the fanzine's contents have been taken into consideration and are currently being acted upon. Thanks for your co-operation on this.

WHIPLASHED

MAIL.

write to JOHN HILL 29 SKIRBECK ROAD
BOSTON LINCS PE21 6DA

Dear John,
Thankyou for sending me WHIPLASH SMILE 3. I'm afraid I have to blow raspberries to the general direction of PREDATOR. I mean for a start what's the point of having a big ugly monster if he's going to fight fair? He should be dumped out of the uglies union. And wow, wasn't it convenient that the only thing the monster can't see through is mud, the one thing Arnie and his un-merry men are up to their elbows in?? Good job the monster didn't land in the arctic eh, or else goodbye world (Hmmm, perhaps not such a bad thing, if it dispenses of half-baked movies such as this).
Another flix that was accused of sparking off violence that Paul Higson and forgot was A CLOCKWORK ORANGE.
Time to ride off into the sunset, eyes watering as I've forgot my sunglasses. All the best to you and yours, and til KING KONG does the boogie-woogie, I'll be yours faithfully,
Philly Collins,
Leyton, London.

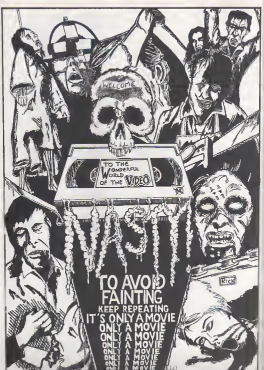
P.S. Is Elmer Fudpucker the same Elmer Fudpucker who's in the Guinness book of records for stuffing cherries up his nose?

WELL PHILIP, YOU'RE ENTITLED TO YOUR OPINION, EVEN IF IT IS THE WRONG ONE! OOOPS, THAT SOUNDED A BIT SHOCK XPRESSion DIDN'T IT? APOLOGIES PHIL, AND TO ANSWER YOUR ELMER FUDPUCKER QUERY, I SUGGEST YOU LOOK AT PAGE 66 OF THE APRIL 86 EDITION OF VIDEO THE MAGAZINE!

Dear John,
Thanks so much for WHIPLASH SMILE, very, very impressive!
Why is it British fanzines are so much better than American ones? I have now read three (yours, SAMHAIN and IMAGINATOR) and quite frankly they out perform any I've found regularly published here.
I appreciate the amount of wordage you squeeze into an issue. Pictures, stills, artwork etc are nice, BUT it's the text that makes a fanzine and I'm happy to see you don't ignore this very important asset.
From your letters page, it sounds like folks there (and in Finland) are still subjected to the government's outright banning of films. What a shame as it gives them a reputation they hardly deserve, the demand for these titles would'nt be half as great if they were freely available.
Phil Bond's piece on Italian zombies was great, only now are these films finding coverage in the u.s. Richard Griffiths CRYPT OF TERROR once again covered a realm of subject matter I truly enjoy, and is an interesting forum for his views. A dry sense of humour pervades, and I for one am glad he's to appear regularly. A lot of editors are better packagers than actual writers, but I'm pleased to say John, that you're the exception your reviews of DOLLS and PRINCE OF DARKNESS help point this out. In your comments on TEXAS CHAINSAW 2 you encapsulated all the elements that made Hooper's film an impossible act to follow, I can't bring myself to watch the second one, though I must say your comments have tempted me.
Again I appreciate the issue and hope to see future editions.
Craig Ledbetter,
'HI-TECH TERROR'
Kingwood, Texas,
U.S.A.

THANKS CRAIG FOR THE GREAT LETTERS, NICE TO KNOW OUR EFFORTS ARE BEING APPRECIATED SO FAR AWAY!
CRAIG IS THE EDITOR OF THE U.S. FANZINE, HI-TECH TERROR (SEE 'THE FANZINE SCENE') AND WILL BE JOINING THE STAFF OF THIS VERY PUBLICATION SOON.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24.


WELCOME
TO THE
WONDERFUL
WORLD
OF THE VIDEO
NASTY
RICK
TO AVOID
FAINTING
KEEP REPEATING
IT'S ONLY A MOVIE
ONLY A MOVIE
ONLY A MOVIE
ONLY A MOVIE
ONLY A MOVIE
ONLY A MOVIE
ONLY A MOVIE
ONLY A MOVIE

VIDEO NASTY Checklist.

AS a means of starting off our special coverage of the video-nasties, this issue, printed below is the current list of films banned in the United Kingdom, which were outlawed following the Attorney General's statement in the House of Commons on 23rd of July 1984. The following have been subject to prosecution under section 2 of the Obscene Publications Act of 1959.

ABSURD (AKA ANTHROPOPHAGUS II; HOMINIA) (Italy 1981)
Directed by Peter Newton (AKA Joe D'Amato; Aristide Massaccesi)
Starring George Eastman; Annie Belle; Ian Danby; Charles Borromel. MEDUSA HOME VIDEO.

ANTHROPOPHAGUS (AKA ANTHROPOPHAGUS THE BEAST; THE GRIM REAPER) (Italy 1980)
Directed by Joe D'Amato. Starring Tisa Farrow; George Eastman; Saverio Vallone; Vanessa Steiger. VIDEO FILM PRODUCT

AXE (AKA LISA; CALIFORNIA AXE MASSACRE) (USA 1977)
Directed by Frederick R Friedel. Starring Leslie Lee; Ray Green, Jack Cannon; Frederick R Friedel. VRO.

BEAST IN HEAT (AKA HORRIFYING EXPERIMENTS OF THE SS) (Italy 1979)
Directed by Ivan Katansky (rumoured to be Walerian Borowczyk)
Starring Macha Magall; Kim Gatti, John Braun JVI.

BLOODBATH (AKA BAY OF BLOOD; TWITCH OF DEATH NERVE) (Italy 1971)
Directed by Mario Bava. Starring Claudine Auger; Luigi Pistilli; Claudio Volonte; Laura Betti. HOKUSHIN.

BLOOD FEAST (USA 1963)
Directed by Herschell Gordon Lewis Starring Thomas Wood; Connie Mason; Mal Arnold; Lyn Bolton. ASTRA.

BLOOD RITES (AKA THE GHASTLY ONES) (USA 1968)
Directed by Andy Milligan. Starring Don Williams; Veronica Radburn; Maggie Rogers. SCORPIO VIDEO.

BLOODY MOON (Spain/Germany 1981)
Directed by Jess Franco. Starring Olivia Pascal; Christoph Moosbrugger; Nadja Gerganoff INTERVISION.

BURNING, THE (USA 1980)
Directed by Tony Maylam Starring Brian Matthews; Leah Ayres; Fisher Stevens, Holly Hunter. THORN EMI

CANNIBAL APOCALYPSE (AKA CANNIBALS IN THE STREETS; INVASION OF THE FLESH HUNTERS) (Italy 1980)
Directed by Anthony Dawson (AKA Antonio Margheriti) Starring John Saxon; John Morghen; Elizabeth Turner, Cindy Hamilton; May Heatherly; Cinzia Carelle. REPLAY.

CANNIBAL FEROX (AKA MAKE THEM DIE SLOWLY) (Italy 1981)
Directed by Umberto Lenzi Starring Lorraine De Selle; John Morghen; Bryan Redford; Richard Bolla. REPLAY.

CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST (Italy 1979)
Directed by Ruggero Deodato Starring Francesca Ciardi; Luca Robert Kerman; Perry Pirkanen; R Bolla GO VIDEO

CANNIBAL MAN (AKA APARTMENT ON THE 13TH FLOOR) (Spain 1972)
Directed by Eloy de la Iglesia. Starring Vincente Parra; Emma Cohen; Eusebio Poncela; Vicky Lagos. INTERVISION

DEVIL HUNTER (AKA MAN HUNTER) (Italy/Spain/W.Germany 1980)
Directed by Clifford Brown (AKA Jess Franco). Starring Al Cliver; Ursulle Fellner. CINE HOLLYWOOD

DON'T GO IN THE WOODS ALONE (USA 1981)
Directed by James Bryan Starring Nick McCalland; James P. Hayden. VIDEO NETWORK.

DRILLER KILLER (USA 1979)
Directed by Abel Ferrara. Starring Ferrara; Carolyn Marz; Harry Schultz; Baybi Day; Alan Wynroth. VIPCO.

EVILSPEAK (USA 1982)
Directed by Eric Weston. Starring Clint Howard; R D Armstrong; Joseph Cortese; Claude Earl Jones. VIDEOSPACE

EXPOSE (AKA HOUSE ON STRAW HILL; TRAUMA) (UK 1975)
Directed by James Kenelm Clarke. Starring Udo Kier; Fiona Richmond; Linda Hayden; Patsy Smart. INTERVISION

FACES OF DEATH (USA 1980)
Directed by Conan Le Cilaire. Introduced by Dr Francis B Gross. ATLANTIS

FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE (AKA 1313 FURY DRIVE) (USA 1977)
Directed by Robert Endelson. Starring William Sanderson VISION ON

FLESH FOR FRANKENSTEIN (AKA ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN) (USA 1973)
Directed by Paul Morrissey (or Antonio Margheriti, if you believe the Aurum encyclopedia). Starring Udo Kier, Monique Van Vooren; Joe Dallesandro, Carlo Mancini. VIPCO.

FOREST OF FEAR (AKA TOXIC ZOMBIES) (USA 1980)
Directed by Charles McCrann. Starring Charles Austin; John Amplas. MONTE VIDEO

GESTAPO'S LAST ORGY (AKA BORDELLO SS) (Italy 1976)
Directed by Cesare Canevar. Starring Marc Loud, Danielle Levy; Maristella Greco. VIDEO FILM PROD.

HOUSE BY THE CEMETARY (Italy 1981)
Directed by Lucio Fulci Starring Katherine MacColl; Giovanni de Nave, Dagmar Lassander; Daniele Dora. VIDEOMANIA.

HOUSE ON THE EDGE OF THE PARK (Italy 1981)
Directed by Ruggero Deodato. Starring David Hess; John Morghen; Annie Belle; SKY.

ISLAND OF DEATH (USA/GREECE 1972)
Directed by Nico Mastorakis. Starring Bob Belling; Jane Ryall. VIP

I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE (AKA DAY OF THE WOMAN) (USA 1981)
Directed by Meir Zarchi Starring Camille Keaton; Eron Tabor; Richard Pace, Anthony Nicholls; ASTRA

LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT (AKA KRUG & CO; SEX CRIME OF THE CENTURY) (USA 1972)
Directed by Wes Craven. Starring David Hess; Lucy Grantham; Sandra Cassel; Marc Sheffler; Fred Lincoln. VPD.

LOVE CAMP 7 (USA 1968)
Directed by Lee Frost. Starring Bob Cresse; David Friedman. ABBEY

MADHOUSE (Italy 1982)
Directed by Ovidio G Assonitis. Starring Michael Macrea; Trish Everly. MEDUSA.

MARDI GRAS MASSACRE (USA 1971)
Directed by Jack Weis. Starring Curt Dawson, Laura Misch. BERRAN

NIGHTMARES IN A DAMAGED BRAIN (AKA NIGHTMARES) (USA 1981)
Directed by Romano Scavolini. Starring Baird Stafford; Sharon Smith, C J Cooke; Mike Cribbs; John Watkins WORLD OF VIDEO.

NIGHT OF THE BLOODY APES (Mexico 1968)
Directed by Rene Cardona. Starring C L Moctezuma; A M Solares. IVER

NIGHT OF THE DEMON (USA 1981)
Directed by James Wasson Starring Joy Allen; Michael Cutt IVER.

SNUFF (USA/Argentina 1972)
Directed by Michael Findlay No cast available. ASTRA

SS EXPERIMENT CAMP (Italy 1979)
Directed by Sergio Garrone. Starring Sirpa Lane; Carl Slet. GO VIDEO

TENEBRAE (AKA UNSANE) (Italy 1982)
Directed by Dario Argento. Starring Anthony Franciosa; John Saxon, Guiliano Gemma, Darlo Nicolodi. VIDEO MEDIA.

WEREWOLF AND THE YETI (AKA NIGHT OF THE HOWLING BEAST) (Spain 1975)
Directed by Miguel Iglesias Bonns. Starring Paul Naschy; Grace Mills; Castillo Escalona; Silvia Solar CANON.

ZOMBIE FLESHEATERS (AKA ZOMBIE, ZOMBIE 2) (Italy 1979)
Directed by Lucio Fulci. Starring Tisa Farrow; Ian McCulloch; Richard Johnson; Auretta Gay; Al Cliver. VIPCO.

The Great VIDEO NASTY Debate.

MAIN TEXT BY JOHN HILL.

The obvious question I suppose is why cover this topic now? Half a decade after it was first an issue. Well firstly, there are many new fans out there who were'nt into the genre when the debate surrounding the dreaded video nasty was first raging, and from our survey there were a great number of requests for coverage of the subject. Next, I don't think the subject should be allowed to be forgotten, though in many cases, the 39 films currently banned are pretty poor, it is what they stand for that is important, namely the mindless censorship of our freedom to view what we choose in the sanctity of our own homes. Finally, in the light of recent events, it seems a very suitable time to re-investigate these films.

So, what is a video nasty? Well a video nasty is a media-spawned phrase for a media-spawned phenomena, it was apparently Mary Whitehouse who first came up with the term during a meeting of her vegetarian crones who apparently had nothing else better to do, and the gutter-press naturally soon latched onto this, and before too long the term 'video nasty' was being splashed across the front pages of the popular brain-dead tabloids. The snowballing effect of this public outcry was the eventual drawing up of a shortlist of some sixty odd films, chosen apparently at random from guidelines that were vague to say the least.

What constitutes a video nasty?

The original guidelines as to what could be deemed corruptive, and therefore open for prosecution and eventual outlawing, were frankly (like the whole proceedings) a joke. At the time I remember reading an early video magazine which printed the somewhat dubious list of acts for which a film could be banned These included, cruelty to animals; rape; abuse of children; violent sex; torture; cannibalism; the violent use of ordinary household items (?); perversion (a somewhat vague category to say the least) and several other factors too absurd to mention. In fact, via these guides it was possible to ban just about anything, from JAWS (cruelty to animals) to FRIDAY THE 13TH (household items), fortunately though, the department of public prosecutions and the various legal bodies behind the prosecuting of movies, were'nt quite as thorough as that, and managed to whittle out a mere sixty films, though the list gradually went down, as they realised just how ridiculous some of their frantic decisions had been. I should think in reality, they had a good idea of what they wanted off the shelves to begin with, and drew their guidelines up around these titles, hence the banning of anything with the word 'cannibal' in the title, including the relatively tepid Spanish film CANNIBAL MAN, which includes no cannibalism whatsoever.

Why ban films at all?

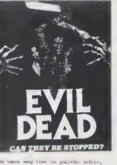
It really depends on which side of the fence you sit on to answer this question, but I expect the majority of readers of this magazine are anti-censorship, at least I hope you are, or else I might as well pack up and go home now.

If you are therefore anti-censorship, then the only reason you can see for banning these films is, in actuality, the real reason, namely that back in 1982, and up until this very day, a group of hopeless, wimpy conservative MPs desperate to make a name for themselves in a political party dominated by the least sympathetic prime minister this country has ever had the misfortune to have, decided to pick on a suitably easy target, to gain a bit of publicity for themselves, and as the British press is so Tory-dominated they succeeded in doing just that, making a name for themselves, albeit briefly.

The pro-censorship lobby, however would undoubtedly refute these claims, on the grounds that these films are

Unvorstellbares wird auf der Kinoleinwand zur grausamen Wirklichkeit!
Die Rache der KANNIBALEN
JOHN MORGHEN
BRIAN REDFORD
ZORA KEROWA
VENANTINO VENANTINI
Regie UMBERTO LENZI
Kamera GIOVANNI BERGAMINI
Eine DANIA-MEDUSA Filmproduktion Rom, im Verleih der Arcana / arabella Film

▲ GERMAN ARTWORK FOR 'CANNIBAL FARCE'



evil, corruptive, dangerous properties, that must be taken away from the gullable public, before our nation is swept by hordes of psychotic citizens with cannibalistic fixations, running around terrorizing the honest, decent clean-living folk that the government represents. The arguments for banning films seem to be as follows: violent films encourage violent behaviour, this is of course utter bollocks, the only people who could possibly be affected in such a way are mentally unstable persons, who should'nt be let anywhere near a video in the first place, besides which they probably could'nt work out how to use one anyway. But, let's suppose a mentally unstable person is affected by violence he or she sees on a video cassette, is that the fault of the film-makers, is it something for which the majority must suffer for? I say no, perhaps if the police spent less time running around the country seizing videos, and spent their time more constructively actually putting such dangerous individuals behind bars then the world would become a safer place. Now I realise this is the simple solution to a complex problem, but the point is, it has never, and will never be proved that watching faked violence on a television or cinema screen can trigger off the urge to immitate such an act in reality, well at least not in the case of an intelligent, reasonable human being, of which I count myself one. And obviously the majority of people must be intelligent in this country if they keep electing a conservative government who of course are never wrong, or am I missing the point? The one strand of people who are constantly mentioned for protection against the horrors of video horrors are, of course, children, now I can see the reasons behind this judgement, for children are lower in intellect and perhaps they can't differentiate between fantasy and reality, though I doubt this is a fact, kids are'nt as stupid as we make believe. I for one have been watching horror films since I was about seven or eight years old, and that certainly is'nt bragging, but a fact, at first I watched on TV, then with the advent of pre-recorded tapes, on video, and of course when old enough I started at the cinema. I have never suffered nightmares, never once had the urge to kill anyone (at least not connected with film-influence, though I do get a little aggressive when I see Mary Whitehouse sticking her nosele in on TV) and have always enjoyed the experience. Now I know this is'nt the case with everyone, several children can't watch stuff like that without suffering nightmares, well that's fair enough, but surely in such cases it should be the parents who do the controlling, not the government with an outright banning of material? Though having said all that in the anti-censorship side, I must admit there are times when censorship should be employed, for example on films such as BEAST IN HEAT and SS EXPERIMENT CAMP, which use such a hideous subject matter as nazi war crimes (real events) to gain an audience, in such cases I agree with the censors, these films are sick, and anyone who can gain pleasure from them is just as sick. Now there are no people out there who are going to immitate Hitler (at least I hope not), so that argument goes out of the window, but what the people in the nazi war-camps went through should never be forgotten, as they were subjected to the lowest nadir of human nature, and their experiences should never

be trivialised for the sake of an exploitive film.

The films themselves.

The current 39 films that are illegal in this country are an eclectic bunch to say the least, they come from most sub-genres, and most did'nt deserve consideration for prosecution, let alone outright banning.

Most of the outlawed films are low-budget offerings, that would probably have gone on to live out a life of relative obscurity , had it not been for the unmerritted publicity they gained at the hands of the DPP. There are several films on the list that headed the outrage, such as I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE, a thoroughlly repulsive and slimy film about rape and revenge that sinks to our most basest instincts, DRILLER KILLER, a complicated and paranoid film picked out for its gory slayings, then there was LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT a powerful sleaze epic concerning rape. One film that was at the fore-front of the nasties campaign was FACES OF DEATH, a rather unpleasant documentary showing various people and animals suffering or getting snuffed, though hardly the most tasteful film ever made, quite how it can be justified a nasty when similar scenes are transmitted on the tea-time news is a mystery. Another of the more infamous films to find itself on the banned list, was SNUFF, a wonderfully successful gimmick film, which tagged a supposedly real, yet obviously fake murder of a young actress onto a rather dull Mansonesque storyline, the resulting outrage about the possibility of 'snuff' films found the film being caught up in a blitz of controversy, not to mention a shower of financial rewards. A good deal of the films currently banned in the UK are from the Italian splatter wave of the late seventies, and early eighties, such films as D'Amato's ABSURD and ANTHROPOPHAGUS; Deodato's HOUSE ON THE EDGE OF THE PARK and CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST; Lenzi's CANNIBAL FEROX; Fulci's HOUSE BY THE CEMETARY and ZOMBIE FLESHEATERS; and even Argento's TENEBRAE. These films are usually technically inept, yet deliriously entertaining, they cannot be taken seriously,

THE MOST UNUSUAL NASTIES.

as chosen by PAUL HIGSON.

A tribute to the stupidity of the police and moralists alike.

1) ZOMBIE FLASH EASTER.

HISTORY: This is, of course, a classic misprinting of ZOMBIE FLESHEATERS The misprint was regarded as another movie and added briefly to the list, either that or a bogus joke on the horror fan itself.

2) APOCALYPSE NOW.

HISTORY: The police at fault here, grabbed copies of the famous Francis Ford Coppola movie from the shelves, mistaking it for CANNIBAL APOCALYPSE.

3) THE BIG RED ONE.

HISTORY: Can this be true that they mistakenly picked on this as a hard-core porno courtesy of the film's title, or is it just another inspired hoax?

4) FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE.

HISTORY: In October 1984 this was one of the last four titles added to the list of nasties, along with AXE, the relatively anaemic FUNHOUSE and THE REVENGE OF THE BOGEYMAN, and only because it showed clips from the first movie. The latter two were dropped from the list shortly afterwards (strangely, THE BEYOND, THE LIVING DEAD AT THE MANCHESTER MORGUE and CONTAMINATION left the list before them). The thing that makes FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE such an odd choice for a nasty is, incredibly, the fact that the film was rated 15/AA!

5) CHILDREN OF THE CORN.

HISTORY: This movie as a Thorn EMI release had already visited the certification/censorship boards of not only the BBFC and the BVA but also Thorn EMI's TEBE, and yet in November 84, when the Hampshire police seized it from local shops. They were advised to return them, and did so. Another film that has gone under the revised certification boards for video release that was hassled extensively, was VIDEODROME, whilst POSSESSION too, was taken from many shelves during 1985, despite its reprieve from the nasties list and a screening on Channel 4, the only nasty(with the exception of the 'accidents' THE BIG RED ONE and APOCALYPSE NOW)to be screened completely on television!

6) THE DEVIL AND MAX DEVLIN.

HISTORY: In 1982 while publications like Video Times and Popular Video were singing along with Whitehouse, and fainting at the sight of serial killers and rape-cum-revenge flicks on video, Lee T Sanford was jumping to the defence of the sick nasties courtesy of the pages of Video Viewer. Even back then he was active in their defence when earlier in the year at the height of the nasties hiatus he ran up a spoof petition demanding the banning of a sick and horrific film readily available on video. The idea behind the petition was to prove that the local watch committee and police force were indiscriminately seizing films not because they were necessarily of a so-called nasty nature, but because the films were simply horror with regards to title or cover. The bogus petition was handed over to the watch committee who having innocently handed it in to the local police station, who promptly dispatched several of their officers to the local video shops demanding that the dealers hand over this offensive title. Upon requesting the title they were met with amazed and hysterically amused dealers and shop assistants. The film that led to the local watch committee being embarassed , the so-called sick and disgusting 'nasty' that left the local constabulary with red faces was in fact, the PG rated Walt Disney film THE DEVIL AND MAX DEVLIN, which starred Bill Cosby as a black devil in this family comedy.

HORROR MARKET

WANTED: Information on 'PHOENIX 5' Australian TV series
Also wanted, INVASION OF THE BLOOD FARMERS & CANNIBAL FEROX
on VHS format.
Write to: RON ROBINSON, 44 HAYCLOSE CRESCENT, KENDAL PARKS,
CUMBRIA, LA9 7NT.

WANTED: Rare horror and science fiction magazines/fanzines from
1957 to present day.
HARALD BOLEVAL, BEIMGASSE 44, 2324 SCHWECHAT-RANNERSDORF,
AUSTRIA.

WANTED: Good horror books (paper and hardback), and DAWN OF
THE DEAD; ALIEN; EVIL DEAD 1 & II; ELM STREET 1, THE THING (82);
ALLIGATOR; TEXAS CHAINSAW and any Hammer (VHS originals)
GARRY MACKENZIE, 17 GLENROE TERRACE, INVERNESS, IV3 6EQ

WANTED: Uncut zombie films on VHS.
SIMON SMITH, 25 PEMBROKE AVE, BALBY, DONCASTER, DN4 OND

WANTED: VHS or BETA copies of THE ISLAND, WITCHFINDER GENERAL
any uncut Bruce Lee movies and any episodes of SPACE 1999
ROGER CHALIS, 17 FINNWOOD AVE, SIDCUP, KENT, DA15 8HN

FOR SALE: VHS originals, bargain prices, for example, MANIAC,
BASKET CASE; TEXAS CHAINSAW; ZOMBIE FLESHEATERS; BOGEYMAN;
HILLS HAVE EYES 2; INVASION OF BLOODFARMERS; 2000 MANIACS etc.
JOHN LICHOTA, 1 REDWOOD CLOSE, WATERFORD PARK, RADSTOCK,
BATH BA3 3ER.

HORROR VIDEO RENTAL CLUB. Many titles available, nasties;
imports, latest releases (uncut) and the totally obscure
available for rental. For details of this all-new HORROR
SOCIETY, write to J. STANLEY, 13 PORTHILL RD, SOUTHMEAD,
BRISTOL, BS10 5SR Please enclose SAE.

Large collection of VHS originals for sale/swap. SAE for list.
GARRY GRANT, 77 SANDBANKS RD, WHITECLIFFE, POOLE, DORSET,
BH14 8NT.

WANTED: Japanese fantasy film journal, Japanese Giants, and
any other magazine, book or fanzine that includes GODZILLA.
Also issues 1 and 3 of SHOCK XPRESS.
MAX DELLA MORA, PIAZZA TRIPOLI, 7, 20146, MILANO, ITALY.

VHS originals for sale, including SUSPIRIA (£20), RED NIGHTS OF
GESTAPO (£10), WRONG WAY (£8), WITCH WHO CAME FROM SEA (£12),
MAUSOLEUM (£8), DEADLY SPAWN (12) etc. SAE for list.
PETE WARING, 41 HOMESTEAD, CLAYTON BROOK, BAMBER BRIDGE,
PRESTON, LANCS, PR5 8HR.

and their subsequent banning is an insult to our intelligence.
Most of the remainder of the banned films are obscurities from various countries, that have for some unknown reason been deemed more offensive than any other horror film of their ilk. Who, in all honesty had even heard of NIGHT OF THE BLOODY APES; AXE; DON'T GO IN THE WOODS; FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE, MARDI GRAS MASSACRE; ISLAND OF DEATH or NIGHT OF THE DEMON before they were banned? Not too many I suspect, and I should imagine most have now heard of and probably seen them, thanks to a large underground market that has grown up since their banning, as the old 'Jam' record goes "People get what the people want", and anyone wanting to view these, films, and by nature most horror fans are completists anyhow, will do so, either legally or not, it seems to me the most sensible thing to have done was to have left the films legal, thus avoiding all the sleazy underground goings on, and instead to have introduced tighter controls on who can rent out such films, and to let the judgement on children watching stuff, rest with the parents, who surely know the way their kids will react, more than a government ever could?

What does it matter if films are banned?

I'm not here to defend the 39 films in question, I have seen all of them now, and of those 39, I would give about half a dozen above five out of ten if I were to review them in our review section. There is no doubt the majority of the films outlawed are pretty poor efforts, so why care if we can't see them? The answer simply, is once you've drawn up one guideline, it is so easy to extend it, the old snowball principal, who's to say that a member of the so called moral-majority (a term I find so offensive, I think the majority of people in this nation are sick to their back teeth of interferring winge-bags deciding on our behalf what we can or cannot view) who can find something offensive in a piece of shit like BLOODY MOON won't find just as much to offend in an original and highly intelligent film like DAY OF THE DEAD? And herein lies a very disturbing point, for the powers that be seem to have no understanding whatsoever as to what constitutes a good film, remember the difficulties such as

Nasty Novels

Selected by GARETH JAMES.

The video world as we all know has its fair share of the 'nasty' but as we look towards the latest Savini shocker, the literary world is already turning out tales of visceral horror that would send Lucio Fulci screaming for his mother! The 'literary nasty' made its first appearance in the early 70s, these graphic tales of horror were for the first time accessible to the public and what followed could only be described as a tidal wave of carnage, the books becoming almost instant bestsellers. Now, after the talentless gas novel gorehounds have moved on, there remains a legacy of violent images that plays a role in the modern horror novel, and when well written, can evoke a feeling of fear and dread that a film could never hope to achieve. Below is a short list of some of the notables from the archives of the literary nasty, for those wanting to start off in the field.

THE RATS (James Herbert)

Probably the most acclaimed and well read 'nasty' of the seventies. Herbert's unique style of bloodshed creates some horrific images in a tale of London besieged by killer rodents. I never went near my hamster for weeks afterwards!

DEATHDAY (Shaun Hutson).

Easily the most bloodthirsty author to date, DEATHDAY catalogues atrocity after atrocity, when an evil amulet is discovered by two workmen. Babies in microwave ovens, regular decapitations and dismemberment are all included in Hutson's vomit-inducing retro.

PET SEMATARY (Stephen King).

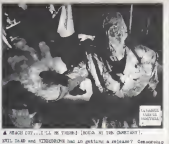
Not a nasty in the sense of graphic horror (although it has its moments) King's novel deserves a mention for the nasty taste it leaves in the mouth once read. A genuine bad dream of events in which one man's love for his family destroys them all. The death of the character 'Gage', a small child, is incredibly sad and numbing.

THE FOG (James Herbert).

With Herbert's second novel, THE FOG, is created a literary classic. A fog which causes people to become murderously insane sweeps across our capital city in an un equalled nightmare vision causing macabre deaths nearly every page. Herbert's finest novel, placing him as the master of the horror tale.

LET'S GO PLAY AT THE ADAMS (Mendal Johnson)

You won't find any killings in this, but it's a very nasty tale of school children's power and compassionlessness for a young babysitter. Once read it will haunt you for weeks after, very harrowing stuff indeed, physical and mental barbarity I found difficult to contemplate



▲ REACH OUT...I'LL BE THERE! (HOUSE BY THE CEMETARY).

EVIL DEAD and VIDEODROME had in getting a release? Censorship can, and I'm sorry to say is, spreading like a cancer on our freedom, and the only reason I can say what I have, is because of the freedom of speech, a fundamental policy of democracy, as is freedom to view what one desires, a freedom that no longer exists in the United Kingdom at least. It is a very slippery slope.

The latest developements.

Of late, the whole video nasty debate has been in danger of flaring up again, newspapers have recently carried reports of new laws which allow trading standards officers to search video shops for under the counter films. The new government watchdog committees on violence in film, and particularly television has been formed, headed by Sir William Rees Mogg, which promises yet more interference. And most absurd of all, some bright spark in the cabinet has decided it would be a wonderful idea if a law was brought in to stop people building up video libraries, by attempting to pass a law that would force everybody to erase any recordings made from television after a period of 28 days. This is the most absurd suggestion from a government with some of the most absurd policies ever followed, quite how such a law could be carried out is a mystery, what would happen - groups of police raiding homes to check everyone has taped over the episodes of Eastenders from last month? The mind boggles, and our intelligence should panick that the people who create such policies are in power over our life and future, forget video nasties, that last thought is much scarier.
Quite where it will all end I don't know, and I don't want to know, the further censorship of television continues, and next up would appear to be the horror literature field (which does indeed include fanzines!), we can only pray that someone out there realises the longterm damage that is being created, and on that cheerful note, I'll round off this angry little lecture, and hand you over to other people's opinions, and to coverage of the actual films themselves, which is afterall what all this is about. Any opinions you may have about what you've just read, or are about to read, will be received with great interest, what are YOUR views on the 'video nasties' what can you add to the great video nasty debate?

SENSE & CENSORSHIP

THE SUPPRESSION OF TELEVISION & FILM.

The debate surrounding censorship continues to occupy a great deal of attention, partly since it provides easy, sensationalistic copy for the gutter press, with violence on television taking precedence since the killings in Hungerford last year. Following these events the television companies either censored or withdrew a number of their films - BLACK CHRISTMAS; BATTLETRUCK, CHRISTINE, THE DEAD ZONE; INDIANA JONES; and even a 60's Steve McQueen western, NEVADA SMITH! The BBC even announced that it would cover re-screen FIRST BLOOD, whilst ITV vowed not to show the Clint Eastwood film SUDDEN IMPACT. The list serves to indicate how hard the horror/fantasy genre has been hit. It was in this climate that Panorama made 'Violence on Television. How far has television helped to foster a violent society?', presented by Kate Adie and broadcast on Monday, Feb 15th. The following is an outline of the programme's contents, the coverage of which seems quite valid, considering the effect censorship in general has had on our genre, and the subject matter this issue is devoted to.

The documentary aimed to examine the increased concern about violence on television and discover how this concern had changed the manner in which TV violence is controlled.

HUNGERFORD. Following the killings in Hungerford, the TV companies pulled a number of programmes from their schedules, some local video shops removed some violent cassettes and the press ran false stories about Michael Ryan. They wrote of his fascination with RAMBO and his collection of violent videos, neither existed, Ryan never owned a video recorder and did not even watch much television. But he did belong to both a legitimate gun club and a specialist book club, owning a collection of war books. However, despite these facts, the damage had been done. Hungerford acted as a catalyst for an increase in the debate over violent television.

LEGISLATION. Television will soon be subjected to the Obscenity Law, with juries deciding whether a programme will deprave and corrupt a significant number of likely viewers. However, this has proved a social and legal minefield in the past. There is also to be a new Broadcasting Standards Council, to define taste tastes and establish standards. But, despite all this action, the government is only acting on assumptions about violence on television.

VIOLENCE IN SOCIETY. Is the relationship between television and violence simply cause and effect? Or is it more complex? For instance domestic violence, the most common form of violence, is rarely depicted on TV, is it society that is in fact more violent than it was in the past? It is certainly the public perception that life is indeed more violent but, according to Deputy Assistant Commissioner Richard Wells, "Intuitively I feel that this week is more violent than last week but....statistically and empirically I can't prove that."

"I believe that millions of people will watch Miami Vice and will watch RAMBO and will leave it within the safety and the sanity of their living rooms, and don't go out and act that violence on the streets. I think there are other triggers, it may be drink, it may be drugs, it may be elements of a divided society which leads people to violence" - Richard Wells.

TELEVISION VIOLENCE AND THE MEDIA. A recent robbery at a Birmingham bingo hall was, according to newspapers, masterminded by a girl after watching TV. However, the getaway driver's story is that they'd "had a few to drink" and the motivation was a "lack of money" and "boredom". In fact "the television was never on". The aforementioned girl and her family were equally surprised by these stories. There seems to be no truth in such newspaper reports.

MEDIA VIOLENCE AND SOCIETY. "People right across society are very worried about the way society is going and so they look around for scapegoats and easy explanations." - Rev. David Jenkins (Bishop of Durham)

Our lives differ greatly from events portrayed on TV, but does television persuade us that violence is more prevalent today? "I suspect that we're not more violent but we know more about it. We are much more self-conscious" - Rev. Jenkins.

CENSORSHIP. It should be pointed out that violence, actually lies behind sex, bad language, transmission times, boring programmes, and coarse humour in the list of viewer's complaints.

CONCLUSION. "In the future, decisions about violence on the four present British television channels may be resolved by less being shown as a result of pressure, including the threat of the courts, rather than proof about violence."

One notable - and unsurprising - point to emerge from the documentary was that whilst the anti-censorship lobby presented facts and well considered opinions, the pro-censorship group resorted to the usual emotional ravings. For example, "Eight out of ten programmes show violence or steamy sex scenes" stated a viewer from Birmingham.

"I think the level of violence on television is far too great and ought to be reduced. Now I cannot prove that, but that is the general impression of the overwhelming number of ordinary people." - Paul Johnson (journalist), he continues, "All kinds of things which people should not have are popular, such as drink, drugs, cigarettes and pornography. All these kinds of things society has to control in people's own interests."

"One hopes that the people that are appointed to the Broadcasting Standards Council will not be the usual wishy-washy liberal types that tend to be appointed. This I find appalling that such a tiny minority should dominate." - Tom Wareing (National Viewers and Listeners Association).

A high level of ignorance was also exposed, particularly by the number of people on the following days Open Air, who were surprised to learn that the press don't always bother with facts. We have not progressed very far since the Manchester police seized copies of APOCALYPSE NOW as a video nasty. Such ignorance is frightening.

The most pertinent comment in Open Air, came from Mike Abrams, an American living in the UK. Through discussing violence on TV in this manner the BBC are simply lending credence to the government's argument that this is a matter of great concern and requires controlling. "The government feel that if they keep attacking the media they will become nervous. When they become nervous they become malleable, the point is the consistency of the attack. .it will make the BBC start flinching."

A more useful programme would have examined the government's dubious position on censorship. One needs only think of the current debate over Clause 28, the reporting of Spycatcher, the attack on obscene records, the suppression of Channel 4 documentary Fireraiser etc.

Now that is an issue worth real concern.

- DAVID BARRACLOUGH.

(THE PROGRAMME UNDER DISCUSSION DID ENTER INTO FURTHER TOPICS, SUCH AS AMERICAN COP SHOWS, NEWS COVERAGE; SATELLITE AND THE EFFECTS OF VIOLENT PROGRAMMES ON CHILDREN, IT WAS ALSO POINTED OUT FEATURE FILMS POSE A FAR WORSE THREAT ON OUR SANITY THAN TV SHOWS, AND FOR FURTHER COMMENT ON THAT SUBJECT READ THIS ISSUES 'CRYPT OF TERROR' IN WHICH GRIFFITHS INVESTIGATES FURTHER THE ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST CENSORSHIP AND THE EFFECT IT HAS HAD ON FILMS, BEARING IN MIND, IT IS CENSORSHIP WHICH GAVE BIRTH TO THE ACTUAL VIDEO NASTIES IN THE FIRST PLACE -ED).

COMMENT

Since the first few video titles were seized back in 1982, I knew we were on our way to total restriction regarding anything that was deemed "unsuitable for adult viewing". We have no way in the matter, whatever protests are made are merely washed aside with accusations of indecency, depravation and so on, and if these laws are broken, the violator suffers a greater penalty than that of someone who commits a mugging!

There are a few blockheads who suggest that because violent videos are easily accessible (which is now a total contradiction) our nation will become an immoral country, they suggest that homicides and sexually related crimes will soar. But these idiots have absolutely no proof or incriminating evidence to suggest that the aforementioned crimes are directly related or even distantly connected with violent movies (in particular horror films). Watching a few Italian actors eat lots of latex does not give any decent self-respecting human the urge to go and eat his fellow man, how can a zombie film possibly influence a murder?

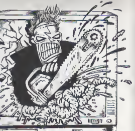
These suggestions are ignored every time. All the government are doing by banning these videos is creating a massive black market (just like in the Soviet Union) for horror fans to obtain the films that they want to see. The films on the nasties list are horror films the same as any other, so why should they be singled out because they are violent? Italy for example, has no film censorship at all, similarly so, Japan, and do you ever hear of huge crime statistics over there? The truth of the matter is, the moral majority (or so we are led to believe) do not like what they see and in their infinite wisdom decide that we also don't want to see it.

Before long, we will reach the thin edge of the wedge, next up is the attack on television, what next - books, magazines, the news? To stop this something must be done, I would like to hear the opinions of any fans out there who feel as strongly as I do, so please write to me at RAW VIRUS, or through the W.S. editorial address, because something has to be done before it is too late.

-NIGE BARTLETT.

NASTY

FILM REVIEWS.



BLOODBATH

Although Mario Bava spent the majority of his directorial career in the depths of the Italian exploitation movie industry, his influence over the development of the horror genre has been immense (though largely unacknowledged). A prime example of this is BLOODBATH which almost serves as a blueprint for the slasher movies of the early 80s yet was made almost ten years previous; in fact he was perhaps too far ahead of everybody else, for by the time FRIDAY THE 13TH opened, Bava was dead. It's difficult to understand why BLOODBATH should have been picked out for the nasties list over the plethora of other slasher movies; perhaps the powers that be saw a subversive intelligence at work that they couldn't find in the others.

The plot, which is at the same time simple and incredibly convoluted, concerns the ownership of a desirable residence situated on a bay of outstanding natural beauty. The film begins with the owner, a wheelchair - bound Countess, being strangled by a noose; her assailant then immediately gets it in the back and is unceremoniously dumped in the bay. A veritable gaggle of sons, daughters (legitimate and otherwise), aunts, uncles and cousins then descend on the property with the intention of securing the estate for themselves. This they do by disposing of any other relative that gets in their way, not to mention the four unsuspecting youngsters who happen by, looking for a quiet place for some nookie and get caught up in the melee. To be honest the scenes involving the "kids" are pretty uninteresting and overlong; they are a singularly boring group. However, their graphic demises by machete to the throat and face, and impalement of a humping couple with a spear (a similar scene to this was cut from FRIDAY THE 13TH 2) certainly compensates for their tedious conversation.

The relatives are hardly real characters at all; they are introduced as being greedy and unscrupulous only to be summarily dispatched by another greedy and unscrupulous nobody. The deaths however, are what the film is all about and gorehounds will not be disappointed. Although the special effects are'nt quite up to 1980s standards, there are plenty of them, and scenes such as death by carving knife; strangulation by telephone; spearing and a great axe decapitating keep ones interest levels high. There is also a splendidly ironic ending where the last couple left alive get shot in the back by their kids playing with the family shotgun. BLOODBATH wins out over many of its later imitators by dispensing with the cheap psychology that characterises many of the slasher movies. There are'nt any weirdos or psychotic maniacs to clutter up the proceedings. Instead, basic human greed is the sole motivation for all the unsavoury mayhem. It's also nice not to have to put up with rantings of a depraved, mother-fixated, overweight Vietnam veteran, while the karo-syrup gets thrown around.

Overall this is one of the best films on the nasties list, and should appeal to gorehounds and slasher movie fans in addition to other Bavaphiles.

– PHIL GODFREY.

BLOOD FEAST

"It's not the best, but it was the first," was how the Wiz of gore himself, H G Lewis, described his first (THE first) splatter movie, BLOOD FEAST. Made in 1963, for 60s and a bag of popcorn, and intended for the American drive-in audience, this film is a textbook example of bad low-budget film-making. The plot has an Egyptian caterer collecting various bodily parts from nubile young women in preparation for an [illegible] party buffet. But that does'nt really matter, as it's only a lame excuse for showing in disturbing detail the dismembering that is all too often associated with such collections.

The acting, using the word merely as a convenient point of reference, is slightly worse than you would expect from your average primary school play, and the sets and camerawork would disgrace the very worst of our imported soaps. The only real reason for watching, the gore, was even cut out of the version that was released in this country which leaves me wondering precisely what form of pleasure people could get from watching it.

However, after reading 'The Amazing H.G Lewis and his World of Exploitation Films' it does make me feel a bit guilty for criticising this film. These people did their best given the resources, and indeed upon repeated viewing, you do tend to warm to the amateurishness in a perverse sort of way. It's a great shame that they could'nt have introduced the high production values and attractive look of 2000 MANIACS one film earlier.

– RICHARD GRIFFITHS.

CANNIBAL FEROX

The revenge of the cannibals on Morghen and his colleagues is pretty nasty; a dick is cut off and eaten, a woman is hung up on meat hooks by her breasts, and to finish of Morghen, he has the top of his head lopped off so the cannibals can dig in for a brain snack.

All of this pales into insignificance however, when compared to the actual violence dished out against the wildlife. A crocodile is slit open alive and its guts wrenched out to be bitten into; a turtle has its head and limbs hacked off; a snake (obviously lowered down by a crewmember) is killed by a lizard; and a monkey (which looks to be in an enclosure so it can't escape) is savaged by a leopard. The worst scene though, is the killing of some type of cute South American mammal. One of the cast takes it as a pet (to elicit some sympathy for its upcoming demise) and ties it to a tree for the night, and surprise, surprise, up slithers a bloody huge python that crushes the poor bugger slowly, with lots of close-ups of the animal squealing in a most disturbing, pathetic way. I don't mind the false deaths of dummy actors, but when creatures are bumped off for real, I do sometimes find the concept of a film crew intently capturing the killing on celluloid as distasteful.

Some of the music in the flick is pretty nifty, and an intestine munching scene is nice'n'splattery. CANNIBAL FEROX is viscerally effective, although its rudimentary narrative doesn't compare with the tricky story structure utilised in the superior CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST.

- KEN MILLER.

CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST

We are greeted by an aeronautical shot of the Amazon, roll the titles accompanied by Riz Ortolani's guitar concerto, and the credits end with the ambiguous statement "for the sake of authenticity some scenes have been retained in their entirety."

Via a TV report we are introduced to an unlikely bunch of explorers led by Alan Yates. They went off into the jungle a couple of months ago in search of the 'yamamoto (?)' tree people and have'nt been seen since. So Prof. Harold Monroe is employed by the Pan-American Broadcasting company to track them down. He's not long in the jungle before he and his guides are confronted by a ritual punishment for adultery, I expect most moral minded people will find this scene to be the most offensive of the catalogue of atrocities that unfurl. I must add that the piece of music played during this and other harrowing scenes is particularly powerful and effective.

Monroe soon finds the gruesome remains of the missing crew, and several cans of their unexposed film. The action then switches to the screening of the unearthed footage and we are treated to a private viewing of film even the editors could'nt stomach. There's a lot of uncalled for animal butchery, along with a ritual abortion scene plus an impaled native girl and the actual finale, the filmed deaths of the documentary crew, who are unceremoneously castrated, butchered and disembowelled. The music jumps wildly and there are several cuts during this, but this was just the UK distributors cutting out and forged and grainy footage.

The lights go on and the network boss orders the projectionist to burn the lot, Monroe pontificates as "who are the real cannibals" before lighting his pipe and wandering off into the city streets. Run the credits.

The film is summed up nicely by one of the camera-crew, during the finale he shouts "cover me we're going to get an oscar for this!" to which the reply comes, "You've got it, right down to the last foot." Somehow, I don't think he meant his own!

- TREVOR BARLEY.

CANNIBAL MAN

No, unfortunately not an Italian gorefest with crazed Vietnam vets feasting on the community, or pissed off natives castrating card-snorting Americans, but a Spanish production, with no flesh-eating at all (the cannibalism is only hinted at), it does however, have a lot in common with Polanski's REPULSION, but without the unsettling hallucinations which made that particular film so powerful.

Although there are a few scenes that the censors could object to, such as a throat cutting, and a meat cleaver in the face, the gore is very withstrained, and there is really no reason why this film should be banned outright (not that any film should be and I'm sure that will be discussed elsewhere this issue) and seems to have been picked on because of that dreaded word 'cannibal' in the title.

Vincente Parra plays a young man who kills a taxi driver when a fight gets out of hand, and from there he gets caught into an escalating circle of violence as he proceeds to kill anybody who he suspects knows of his secret. First he kills his girlfriend who was in the taxi with him, and then goes on to kill his brother (Please, no Alexi Sayle jokes, thankyou - Ed), his fiance, and when her father turns up, him too! As the bodies pile up, and the smell grows, he decides to cut up the stiffs (off-screen) and takes them to his workplace (a slaughterhouse) where they end up as extra ingredient to some mass produced soup.

Parra's strange activitie's are watched by a bloke who fancies him and lives on the 13th floor of the nearby apartment block. The bloke befriends Parra and reveals that he knows everything he has been up to and offers to help him. Parra can't bring himself to kill his new friend and is persuaded to turn himself into the police.

The film is also known as APARTMENT ON THE 13TH FLOOR - a title which is more appropriate, and would have drawn less attention from the censors, although there are obvious advantages for using the more exploitive title.

While CANNIBAL MAN is a well made and acted film, it is neither exploitive enough to be entertaining or arty enough to gain the critical attention of REPULSION, it is ultimately a depressing and boring movie that you aren't really missing out on.

- PHIL TOMS.

DEVIL HUNTER

Although completion dates vary, the presence of a very youthful looking Al Cliver leads me to believe that this film was in fact made in the early seventies, possibly 74, where it has been stated as completed.

Franco, after countless exploitation potboilers stretches out into the voodoo/cannibal/zombie sub-genre with disastrous results having already made MONDO CANNIBAL (CANNIBALS) to get a quick buck or two from Ruggero Deodato's superior CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST, Franco divides his protagonists into two groups, helpless blonde actresses (Gisela Hahn) and tough (and not so intelligent) Vietnam vets (Cliver) and spins a kidnapping yarn which along the way includes a voodoo God, a ping-pong eyed zombie and psychic cannibals!

According to several reports DEVIL HUNTER contains several "repulsive" scenes, which include the tearing away of female genitalia, ripping out of hearts during a sacrifice and such. The original running time is stated as 85 minutes which is also the time stated on the UK video box, so it would seem censorship had taken place even before the film was banned.

DEVIL HUNTER is definitely a negative film, the original director (Armando Ossorio of the BLIND DEAD films of the early 70s) was replaced half way through by the dreadful Jess Franco...a big mistake!

As in his JACK THE RIPPER, the photography is ugly, the exterior shots come out worse and to try and solve this, Franco juices the picture with flashes of chained captive women being raped (off-screen) resulting in dribbles of orange blobs. Claustrophobic gloom, plodding storyline and a very strong resemblance to the stultifying CANNIBAL TERROR, DEVIL HUNTER is a fantastically bad horror movie with not even a hint of inspiration throughout its tedious running time. A plot with a bit of potential is completely wasted by Franco and his cursed zoom lens (Eddie Romero, eat your heart out!). One to avoid at ALL costs!

- NIGE BARTLETT.

DRILLER KILLER

The director himself plays the lead protagonist; a struggling artist who develops a creative block when a noisy punk group moves into the flat next door. He's also going through a rough patch with his girlfriend, and then he sees an advert for a powerdrill, with portable power-pack, on the television. . .

I like this movie, it mixes its gory drill deaths with an interesting study of a man going off the psychological rails.

The tramp killings are effectively staged, notably the full-frontal drill-in-the-forehead demise and the bus stop termination. Though the latter death is less bloody, it is just as nasty; the victim is drilled in the back, through a gap between two panels in the shelter, jerking in a grotesque manner as the drill-bit digs in.

The finale is nicely open-ended and, if I had any gripe concerning the film, it would be that Ferrara (star and director) would've ellicited more sympathy for his character if he'd decided to bump off the rowdy punks rather than the pathetic tramps, but then again, the man he plays is supposed to be unhinged, and not a clear-thinking, revengeful killer.

-KEN MILLER.

EVILSPEAK

All credibility is lost (not that there was any*) with this film finding its way onto the banned list. Apart from being probably the best of the movies currently banned, EVILSPEAK simply has nothing in it whatsoever that could be deemed offensive (or have I lost all sense of good taste?).

The story takes place at a military academy where Clint Howard (brother of director Ron), through the use of a computer, conjures up a satanic demon, who proceeds to possess him, enabling the now sword-wielding young man to take revenge on the classmates who and taunted and abused him so wrecklessly.

Actually, what begins as only mildly diverting, progresses gradually into a fairly compulsive and interesting supernatural yarn, with some nice effects building to a stylish and memorable finale.

Director Eric Weston holds the whole thing together with imaginative flair and this being his debut movie, shows great promise. The acting is credible with veteran actor R G.Armstrong popping up to have his head twisted about rather painfully!

It really is a great pity that the mindless officials who decide which films will or will not be shown to the general public, don't appear to have even the vaguest idea of what constitutes offensiveness. Personally, the only thing I find offensive concerning this film is the fact that someone who obviously hasn't even the remotest understanding of what makes a good fantasy film, can decide what is unsuitable for me to see. [illegible] that is offensive!

- MARK HOCKLEY.

(NOTE:- EVILSPEAK is available in the UK in two versions, the uncut, banned version on the VIDEOSPACE label, and an '18' rated, cut version legally available on the APEX label - Ed)

EXPOSE

Fiona Richmond's screen career began with her sat naked atop Udo Kier in a film which, ten years later, achieved fame as the only British entry on the DPP's forbidden thirty-nine. Nasty fans will find the film somewhat disappointing, though not perhaps as much as those people who bought the film as part of a set of Fiona sex flicks on Intervision back in 1980.

The main bulk of the film concerns Udo as a successful author struggling to write a follow-up to his best seller. The reason for this is simple, naughty Udo had in fact stolen the previous manuscript from a budding young author, who, taking it badly, rubbed himself out.

Udo moves to the country in search of inspiration, but first gets himself a new secretary, enter former jailbait sex kitten Linda Hayden. Udo is immediately impressed by her physical charms, & makes a somewhat hamfisted attempt to get into her pants. After she tells him where to put it, he calls up his girlfriend, and thus Miss Richmond reappears. It's just not his day though, for the two girls are more interested in each other than him, and he has to be contented by spying on a rather vague lesbian scene.

At one point, Linda ventures into a field for some reason, and is assaulted by a couple of yokels, apparently left over from STRAW DOGS, grabbing a shotgun (don't ask) she indulges in some major carnage (though not as much as the censor at the time did during this film). She also offs the housekeeper, and hacks up Fiona in the bath. The reason for all this slaughter is that the suicide case was in fact her husband, and she intends to extract her revenge on Udo!

EXPOSE is only of interest for the presence of exploitation stars Kier and Hayden, and as a typical example of the 70s British sex thriller. It has moments of inspiration, but suffers badly from extensive cuts, okay, these are no faults of the film makers, but they do have a major effect on the film's quality. Still, if you go for the likes of Pete Walker and such, you'll find this passes the time relatively painlessly.

- DAVID FLINT.

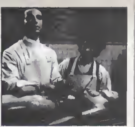
FLESH FOR FRANKENSTEIN

Udo Kier constantly pronounces the word laboratory as lavatory, fondles the intestines and various organs inside of his attractive female creation, and has a spiked pole rammed through him at the end; one of his own organs hanging from the weapon's tip.

Joe Dallesandro gets to bonk around (as in Warhol's DRACULA) a bit, and eventually finds himself at the mercy of the Baron's kids, after everyone else dies one after the other in quick succession.

Not to be taken seriously, with much camp chat and generous splashings of over the top blood 'n' guts, a patchy but fun film.

- KEN MILLER.



INTESTINE FONDLING FROM 'FLESH FOR FRANKENSTEIN'

DAVID HESS...star of
LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT is loose again...
DON'T GO IN THE PARK!

HOUSE ON THE EDGE OF THE PARK

HOUSE ON THE EDGE OF THE PARK

Deodato, a director with the privilege of having not one, but two films on the nasties list (the other being CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST of course), here attempts a variation on the theme of LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT, and succeeds in the seemingly impossible task, of topping Craven's film for unpleasantness.

David Hess, one of the screen's scummiest psychos (he of course being Krug in LAST HOUSE) and his film side-kick John Morghen (an actor who has died in some of the most splattery scenes in screen history, see CITY OF THE LIVING DEAD, CANNIBAL FEROX and APOCALYPSE) gate-crash a yuppie party, and seemingly bored with the activities being served up, decide to do a bit of freelance partying, by raping all the women, and beating and humiliating the men.

The film gets so slimy at times that you feel like taking a quick shower. This I suppose is to the credit of Deodato's unflinching camera, the fact that the majority of the film takes place in one house limits cut-aways, and also Hess' thoroughly unpleasant portrayal of the sadistic psycho. The film really can't be defended, as like I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE, it is nothing more than a gloating portrayal of sadistic sex and violence, and general depravity.

However, THE HOUSE ON THE EDGE OF THE PARK, does boast a surprisingly effective twist ending, where it seems Hess and pal were lured to the party and are killed in revenge of a rape that occurred years earlier. However unlikely a plot twist this may be, it is the only aspect of the film that shows some inspiration, the rest is just a textbook example of uncalled for nastiness.

- JOHN HILL.

I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE

I hated I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE!

But what makes a film bad? Lack of technical ability? Poor acting? Senseless dialogue? Perhaps. But to be fair, this film doesn't really suffer to any great extent from any of these. So surely it can't be so bad after all, but this is the heart of the matter, the film is terrible, but in its content, not its quality.

Now I'm sure there are some out there eager to jump to the defence of this film, but I'd like to ask the question why? We are not discussing censorship here, we are not advocating the banning of films, we are simply calling a piece of shit exactly what it is!

Who can really like or enjoy unpleasant, unnecessary and stupid films like these? Of course, there are always some. But depending on your taste in film, I SPIT is nothing more than an exploitive piece of crap aimed at the lowest instincts of us, the audience, and could easily have been produced by a group of rather pathetic individuals masquerading as film-makers.

A group of creeps rape a girl, the girl decides to get revenge, and proceeds to kill each of them with the expected amount of blood and gore. Well that's fine, I have no problem with that, revenge has been a standard plot device of screenwriters since movies began and we don't want to get into any arguments about its validity just now! (all letters on this subject to the editor!) (Pardon?! Make that all letters to Mark at 7 Kingsdown Close, Pitsea, Basildon, Essex ..I'm fed up with hate mail -Ed!)

But hold on a minute!

Let's try to understand the minds behind this little gem, now remember the girl was raped, she wants revenge, so what does she do? She has sex with one of her rapists! But of course this is only to lull him into a false sense of security so she can get the chance to cut off his penis!! The girl obviously means business! But are we interested? Personally, no I'm not!

Maybe it's just me, but I always thought horror and fantasy were one and the same, meaning style and intelligence, creating an atmosphere of excitement which lifts you out of your everyday life, into a new world of dreams and adventure, but if you do find I SPIT exciting then that's your problem!!

- MARK HOCKLEY.

THIS WOMAN HAS JUST...
CUT CHOPPED BROKE AND BURNED FIVE MEN BEYOND RECOGNITION... BUT NO JURY IN AMERICA WOULD EVER CONVICT HER!
AN ACT OF REVENGE!
starring CAMILLE KEATON ERON TABOR RICHARD PACE ANTHONY NICHOLS
produced by JOSEPH ZBEDA
written and directed by MEIR ZARCHI
RUNNING TIME 98 MIN

LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT

The film that launched Wes Craven into a notoriety that he's still trying to live down to this day. It is understandable why the censors took offence to this one (although condonable) as it is hardly subtle, though I do feel too much importance has been given to the film (particularly by Craven and producer Sean Cunningham), when it is a cheap, enjoyable exploitation movie and nothing more.

It's Mary Collingwood's seventeenth birthday, she's the pretty daughter of Dr. and Mrs Collingwood, the typical middle-class American family, and is off to see a band, ominously called BLOOD LUST, with her friend, Phyllis Stone, who her parents disapprove of as she's from the "wrong side of the tracks". On the way back from the gig they try to buy some drugs, but unfortunately fall into a trap set by Krug, a recently escaped psychopath and rapist, jailed for the slaying of a priest and two nuns. Krug and company who consist of his junkie son-Junior; Weasel-a child molester and general pervert, and Sadie, Krug's bisexual girlfriend, proceed to rape and beat the girls before bundling them into the boot of a car. They proceed to drive off into the country, only to break down a matter of yards from Mary's home, where at the moment the local bumbling police are reassuring her parents that she'll turn up soon enough. (You may recognise one of the cops as a regular on Cagney and Lacey by the way!)

The girls are next taken into the local woods where they are further humiliated, tortured, and then forced to make love to each other. it is these scenes, that provide the only really shocking or unsettling scenes in the whole movie. After a failed escape attempt, Phyllis is disembowelled, and her hand is cut off to show to Mary, who is simultaneously suffering from Krug carving his name on her chest, before being raped again and finally shot.

After all this, the gang decide to find somewhere to stay for a while and end up at the Collingwood's place. (This weak plot 'twist' was stolen from Bergman's VIRGIN SPRING) It's not long before the gang realise their true whereabouts and the Collingwood's soon put two and two together, and decide to take violent revenge. Mrs Collingwood starts by luring Weasel into the woods and promises him a blow-job if he has his hands tied behind his back, the idiot doesn't suspect anything and ends up by having his dick bitten off! Meanwhile Doc. Collingwood is laying traps for the rest of the gang (a familiar Craven plot device, re-used in HILLS HAVE EYES and A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET) Krug manages to avoid serious injury and sets about beating the Doc up, but is interrupted by Junior, who is trying to off his dad. Krug, in a touching display of parental concern persuades his son to blow his own brains out. This diversion allows Doc to grab his nearby chainsaw which he uses on Krug just as the police arrive.

Despite what the above may infer, LAST HOUSE isn't a very gory film nor is it really shocking, it's basically a cheap, trashy exploitation movie and Craven's claims that it is a serious anti-violence statement are laughable. There is a lot of intentional humour to lessen the impact of some scenes, especially the two cops, and the gang's stupidity is overplayed to comic proportions.

David Hess who is excellent as Krug played a similar, though more serious role in Ruggero Deodato's sickie HOUSE ON THE EDGE OF THE PARK, which is even more exploitive than Craven's film.

- PHIL BOHR.

MARDI GRAS MASSACRE

Without doubt, one of the strangest films to make it onto the nasties list, and a film which seems to have no plot other than a weak police investigation to link together a few sacrificial murders.

It's New Orleans, and approaching mardi gras, and the police have a problem, because some nutter is murdering prostitutes, and easily too. However, for us, the viewer, it's not much of a mystery at all, as we are introduced to the killer in the first few minutes. The dastardly miscreant in question is a well-spoken gent in a suit, who frequents strip-joints and bars, picks up various girls, enquires "Are you evil?" and takes them home. Once in his apartment, the girls are stripped naked (there is an awful lot of nude female flesh - both internal and external, in this film) tied to a table, covered in oil (good grief, this is perverted!) and then have their hands and feet stabbed, and finally have their hearts removed! Whilst performing this unorthodox surgery the killer wears some peculiar Aztec priest outfit, and mutters various comments about evil.

The police are on the case, though seem pretty inept at solving it, as it is stated the first three murders take place over a period of three weeks, each one being performed on the same day, at the same time, in the same place....and yet they can't work out where to look for the guy!?!

The final police chase leads to the killer driving into the local docks and disappearing without a trace, and there the film abruptly concludes. This low budget oddity, apparently banned for its obviously fake gore, has little going for it, and is another example of a previously obscure film gaining unmerited fame through the stupidity of the authorities who saw fit to ban it.

- STEVE CHAMBERS.

NIGHT OF THE BLOODY APES

Although the Mexican fantasy cinema has been amazingly prolific over the years, very few of these films have made their way here to the U.K. The most well-known Mexican genre is the horror-wrestling movie which proliferated particularly during the 60s Most of these films seem to have been written and directed by the father and son team of Rene Cardona Sr. and Jr. and NIGHT OF THE BLOODY APES is no exception.

Like many Mexican horror movies of the period, BLOODY APES is a throwback to the Hollywood horror films from the 30s and 40s, though by the time this film came along in 1969 the Mexicans had exhausted just about all the worthwhile storylines So in their infinite wisdom they decided to rehash the old idea of transferring vital organs from a gorilla to a human being, with predictably dire consequences of course. This transplant theme has flourished in poverty-row films during the early 40s, with Boris Karloff and George Zucco throwing the monkey brains around with wild abandon in films such as THE APE and MONSTER AND THE GIRL. Jess Franco then got the ball rolling again in the early 60s with the AWFUL DR. ORLOFF and its various sequels. NIGHT OF THE BLOODY APES is the same old tired nonsense, livened only by endless wrestling scenes (come on, you can't expect a Mexican horror with no wrestling!) some gratuitous mild nudity, and, providing the reason for its inclusion in this issue, a couple of gory bits.

The film tells the heart-rending story of Jose Moreno, a famous scientist whose son is dying from leukaemia. All conventional treatments have failed so he decides the only thing left to do is to transplant a gorilla's heart into his offspring (pretty logical really!) This he does with impressive ease, and before you can say pass the sutures, the son is on the road to recovery. The operation sequence is what caused all the stir at the B B F C, because Cardona decided to use real documentary footage, thus we get to see some real internal organs thrown about, which is quite enough to put you off your dinner! As usually happens in this kind of film, the son soon starts acting weird (He goes ape?-Ed) roaming around, pretending he's King Kong and ripping the clothes off nubile Mexican starlets. It is'nt long before the authorities take an interest in the proceedings, and after fumbling around for an hour they finally corner the guy and put him out of his misery

NIGHT OF THE BLOODY APES is a typical Mexican effort, it's cheap and cheesy, with plywood sets, dreadful acting (though I'm sure the dubbing does'nt help) and its pretty tedious to sit through. There's hardly anything of interest in the entire film (unless you're heavily into wrestling!), the nudity is very tame and the special effects are minimal. In fact the whole thing is pretty turgid, and if there had'nt been those 60 seconds of stock footage which elevated it onto the nasties list, the film would have been discarded and forgotten long ago.

- PHIL GODFREY.

SS EXPERIMENT CAMP

An Italian effort starring a typical gaggle of unknowns about one of those holiday camps run during the war.

To put it bluntly, this film is a real stinker, the only things going for it are terrible dubbing, bad gore effects, and some dire dialogues. ..these are not top recommendations folks!

The storyline, goes something like this, a medical camp has been given the task of finding the perfect woman to father a master race for the German empire. Enter women prisoners and a squad of Germany's finest to whittle them down to find the most suitable subjects.

The experiments to find these women are strange to say the least - couples doing the old in, out, in, out while slowly being chilled in a water tank.Weird! There are a few subplots in the story including a soldier who falls in love with one of the prisoners, a German officer who has his balls bitten off and wants a transplant and a doctor who is blackmailed into doing dangerous operations. Yes, a film with a bit of everything.

The movie's gore content is low, but the medical operations do look un-nervingly realistic and will make you cringe, particularly on the ball transplant. .cross your legs guys!

The scenes of torture are poorly done, see how many times you can see the light bulb being turned on and off in the electric chair sequence. The oven scenes are just as inept, and laughable beyond words.

Overall, cheap, nasty and who's to say such a dubious film should'nt be banned.

TRIVIA: Not only was the film banned but the advertising poster was also censored. The first edition showed a half naked woman hanging from a pole, whilst the later version has a tight fitting bikini penned in!

- KEVIN C BURTON.

TENEBRAE

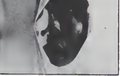
There are those who love Argento and there are others who find his films unintelligable and confusing. What cannot be denied is his incredible sense of visual flair. Perhaps it is this very trait which leads to plot inconsistancies and failings.

For myself, it would be a great loss indeed, if there were no Dario Argento and yet in saying that, TENEBRAE is something of a disappointment. Probably the biggest problem with it was the simple fact that the movie is no more than a basic whodunnit, with no supernatural or fantasy elements (the very things that made SUSPIRIA and INFERNO so powerful). So we are left with Argento's directoral abilities if we are to salvage any enjoyment from the proceedings, but even here, probably because of the material, he is below par, although not surprisingly, there are some strong scenes and set pieces.

As a compensation, there is however a brilliant music score by Fabio Pignatelli, Claudio Simonetti and Massimo Morante, all members of Goblin, which holds your interest when the story ends out. Unfortunately the casting of the awful Anthony Franciosa in the leading role of an author who becomes involved in a brutal series of murders, does'nt help one little bit and this is really the final nail in the film's coffin. Even the colour (so strong and atmospheric in earlier productions) seems bland, looking both dull and expressionless. There is a fair bit of blood spilled at the end, but not so much that this film should be picked out as a nasty.

Still, an Argento failure is superior to most directors best, so it's a real shame you can't see the film yourself to make your own mind up about it.

- MARK MOCKLEY.



A BIRD ABOUT TO RECEIVE BLOODY PLUMAGE
FROM DARIO ARGENTO'S 'TENEBRAE'.

ZOMBIE FLESHEATERS

I felt I could'nt conclude this section on the films currently banned in the UK, without giving coverage to good old Lucio Fulci, a man who has caused more headaches for the BBFC than any other director. And the reason for this is simple, for if given the choice between building up suspense with creeping camera and suggested slaughter, or sticking a twelve inch splinter through a girl's retina, then it's no contest, Fulci will always go for the latter, and it is this unflinching wish to show close-up acts of dismemberment which has gained Fulci such a loyal following of gorehounds.

FLESHEATERS, is probably Fulci s best known film (though his best is unquestionably NEW YORK RIPPER) it being the cheap and cheerful rip-off of Romero's landmark epic DAWN OF THE DEAD. Here zombies menace the locals of a tropical island, in a plot which is just effective enough to carry the action between gore scenes, the highlights of which include the aforementioned splinter scene, a particularly gruesome neck splitting scene (though the uncut guide-dog scene in THE BEYOND even topped this!) various zombie head-splatterings and numerous intestine-munching episodes.

Fulci's style is always crude, though it's difficult not to admire a director who makes an actress swallow real sheep guts and then vomit them back up again, for the sake of reality! FLESHEATERS does however depend rather too heavily on it's gore, especially the 'strong uncut version', but even the heavily cut version has disappeared from the shelves nowadays.

As our survey reveals, a very popular film with fans.

- JOHN HILL.

CRYPT OF TERROR

By Richard Griffiths

WELL HE'S BACK AGAIN, THE MAN WHO SINGLE-HANDEDLY KEEPS THE LETTER'S PAGE GOING! SO HERE IS 'CRYPT OF TERROR PART 38- THE FINAL BEGINNING.'

"Video nasties, issue 4' John said.
That's original I thought, always first with the innovations.
"Something on censorship" he continued, 'fairly serious".
Me? Serious? Well, actually there are very few subjects worth getting serious about. To mis-quote APRIL FOOL'S DAY, 'How can you be serious when there's a guy up there with a button that can blow up the world?", Or something. However, if there's one thing that I do value, it's my right to be able to do what I want to do, and when I want to do it. It's called freedom. Of course the problems start when what you want to do is to the detriment of others, and this is what censorship is all about. The protection of the innocent. In the case of film censorship, the innocent are children, and the general public.

Children need to be protected from bad language, violence and sex. Some would argue that 'The Price is Right' should be on that list, and no doubt very convincingly. They need to be protected because they don't understand the context of what they are seeing. This is the only argument for censorship that I agree with. A few years ago, I managed to get hold of a copy of THE EVIL DEAD. Gleefully, I went round to my neighbours to watch it with them. Their six year old daughter was present "It's alright" they said, "she watches them all". The fact that she watched the film from behind the sofa, through slitted fingers seemed not to worry them. It worried me. I knew that what I was watching was not real, in fact after the huge build up the film had had, the main thing I noticed was how unconvincing and (somewhat endearingly) amateurish the effects were. However, to a six year old who knew nothing about stop-motion photography, make-up and latex, and wouldn't understand about them if she did, all the film depicted was a group of people turning into hideous monsters and killing each other in a lonely house in the woods. Made all the more disturbing for her by the fact we live in a small hamlet in the middle of nowhere. I began to wonder how many other irresponsible parents simply don't care what their children watch. It's a fallacy to say they don't have nightmares about them, as I can testify after watching the cut ZOMBIE FLESHEATERS when I was 13. It scared me rigid, and I found it very difficult to go to sleep for days afterwards. It was years before I dared watch a zombie film again, such a shame it happened to be ZOMBIES LAKE! Now of course, FLESHEATERS is one of my favourite films, and I can sit through an uncut version without flinching, and frequently do. The difference is, now I see the film as a skillful buildup of tension and effects with an over-riding goodtime feeling. The protection of children from such experiences can only effectively be achieved by stricter parental control. Only to allow films that children can watch would be slightly restricting to say the least, and completely unpractical since the majority of films and evening telly programmes would not be shown! Mind you, I'd be perfectly willing if it would get rid of 'Casualty'.

Joe Public also needs to be protected. Apparently, did you know that if you even so much as glance at a few scenes from a horror film that you will immediately go out and commit acts of horrendous violence against your fellow man, copying the scenes you've just viewed in grotesque real-life fantasms? This actually came as quite a surprise to me, though it did explain where all my friends and family had disappeared to over the last few years! Seriously though, this lame argument has been trotted out for years, each time with an increasingly enlightening lack of supporting evidence. It was heartening to see how, though mentioned, this aspect was played down in the Hungerford tragedy. It had at last been realised that it's guns weapons and artillery that kill people, not small boxes of magnetic tape. That said, as 1st of March, I did see this cutting in the local rag, the Shropshire "we're not really right wing" Star. This was followed a day later by the Sun. Personally, I find the thought of drinking someone else's blood slightly off-putting, especially with the spectre of AIDS!

So who do we have to censor us? Looking at films, as you do, we've the British Board of Film Classification and the Director of Public Prosecutions, who goes round wielding The Obscene Publications Act in everyone's faces. The BBFC have two jobs, firstly, to certify every film that has a theatrical and video release, and secondly to force censorship down the throats of the more imaginative distributors at regular intervals. It's a pity they seem completely incompetent doing either job satisfactorily. I accept and support classification. It is important that people should know what they are going to see. What is unfortunate is that the standards used to certify films fluctuate so wildly and represent so many different tastes, they can only be used as an extremely rough guideline. For instance how HOWARD THE DUCK and THE GOLDEN CHILD got PGs is beyond me, just like how TRANCERS and ZONE TROOPERS get a 15 rating alongside CREEPSHOW (bullets in brains etc), when the rereleased CONTAMINATION (no gore, just a name) and CHILLER (a TV movie) get an 18. Occasionally you'll see them attempt to do their job of re-certifying theatrical releases for video by giving PG films a 15, though this practice does seem a bit ludicrous. If a film is ok for a child to see at the pictures, why not at home? They seem to be accepting the fact that few people care about video certificates, and are cynically going through the motions simply to satisfy the powers that be. My main complaint about their job is with the 18 certificate. Theatrical releases can only be seen by over 18s, it's impossible for children to view them, so a theatrical 18 should be relatively intact, as they often are. This is probably due also to the fact that only major films get theatrical releases over here, and they are infinitely favoured by the BBFC anyway. When re-certified for video, theatrical releases are more often than not released in their theatrical form, any cuts being token. This is no doubt to stop Mr and Mrs Public noticing them and complaining. However, the direct to video releases seem to suffer from excessive censorship, a case of what you don't see, won't hurt you, often destroying their very point of existing (see, or rather don't see THE LAMP). The result of this has meant that the video 18 certificate has come to represent anything from a single bullet in the head (off-screen) to a veritable bloodbath. Of course it's needless to say that the big buck American studios get the prime treatment with little censorship, and the far more interesting European films get the chainsaw treatment. Still, no matter how bad the BBFC is, we can at least rest assured in the knowledge that it is a godsend compared with the American MPAA who throw R ratings on everything that wants to make money. Imagine RE-ANIMATOR, FROM BEYOND, DAY OF THE DEAD and EVIL DEAD II rated somewhere between a 15 and an 18. Makes you shudder!

The BBF's input is seemingly redundant once the Video Recordings Act is legal. Since all films must carry a BBFC certificate, they should conform to certain standards. It would, after all, be a bit hypocritical to ban a film with a government approved certificate on it, or would it? TENEBRAE, ZOMBIE FLESHEATERS(cut), THE BURNING and HOUSE BY THE CEMETARY were all given certificates by the BBFC, and were all banned, or rather, the suppliers were liable to prosecution. I don't want to get into the debate here, suffice to say that a lot of the films banned were utter rubbish and deserved to be cut themselves. And who brought these films to the attention of the world, thus making them far more popular than they ever were before? None other than our own tabloids, the chief offender being the Daily Mail, always one to jump onto a popularist bandwagon. A new terminology was introduced to the English language to describe the films liable to prosecution, a phrase that made righteous parents shudder and draw their children closer, and made the actual viewer curse in rage, and that term was "VIDEO NASTY!"

Quite soon, a list of some 55 or so titles was announced as being actual nasties. These immediately became much sought after as people rushed to view the horrendous acts of carnage that lay behind the titles BLOOD FEAST, DRILLER KILLER, S.S. EXPERIMENT CAMP. The titles alone were despicable enough, so the films. However, it soon became apparent that all was not

Vampire film ban

A video store in Minnesota has stopped renting out The Lost Boys, a film about a gang of teenage vampires, after a murder in which three teenage suspects allegedly licked their victim's blood from their hands. Police said at least one of the teenagers became interested in vampirism after repeatedly watching the video.

VAMPIRE KILLERS LICKED BLOOD

A video carly about a gang of teenage vampires was blamed yesterday for a murder in which three young men allegedly licked the victim's blood.

One of them said he watched the video The Lost Boys repeatedly in Sauk Rapids Minnesota.

sell at the DPP swop. Dealers had been prosecuted based on one person's view as to what was obscene, they would then be let off based on another's. Seemingly abject cases were heard in the courts, with heavy sentences for people dealing with films just seconds longer than "approved" versions. Titles went on and off the list, the most notorious title being THE EVIL DEAD, which as I'm sure you'll remember there was a terrific fuss over as it was branded obscene, then ok, then obscene again. Dealers sweated, software houses panicked and TEVL recalled most of their horror stock and reissued it with offensive free material, resulting in a very boring version of SUSPIRIA and putting a very high price on remaining uncut stock, but the most interesting development was yet to come.

In Feb 86, VIM announced "DPP drops four more". Yes, you could now legally own four films that had previously rendered the purveyors liable to jail sentence. Had the law changed? No. Had the films been cut? No. Had VIM made a mistake? No. Had the DPP finally realised that the hysteria and public outcry of a few years back had resulted in some quite absurd decisions? Yes. This surely brought the integrity of the DPP into question and his suitability for the job of censor, after all the films hadn't changed, just the official opinion of them, and if opinion can go one way, it can just as easily go the other. What was needed was some sort of official censor, with legal powers to set firm standards on video, and to keep to them. Of course they already existed—the BBFC. A bill was rushed through the commons which set dates by which films must be certified by, the most important of which was in August 86, when the majority of films in a shop had to be officially certified. Some labels did the honourable thing by certifying their entire back catalogues, but a lot of the films on the shelves belonged to now defunct labels. Unable to be recertified, these films were forced to be removed from the shelves and sold off. Or at least that was the theory, as I'm sure you'll find in most video stores, the applaudable practice of self-certification is alive and well, however illegal it may be.

The only other censorship body is the NVLA who, thankfully, have no power whatsoever and nobody takes seriously anymore. Supposedly representing the silent majority, they are in fact a bigoted minority whose righteous denunciations of everything more adult than SNOW WHITE have led them to become an increasing object of mirth from all sides. Captured in Crypt as Mary Lighthouse, and VIZ as Mary Shitehouse, Ms W has been remarkably quiet of late, no doubt dealing with all those in-family scandals that send people home to incur. Justice is always served.

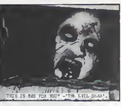
Actually, a couple of years on from the V.R.A., it is obvious to say, with smug hindsight, it was a good idea. Video has cleared its image, the public are satisfied, and practically everything gets a release, all legally and above-board, or above-counter as the case may be. There are actually signs that the BBFC are getting more lenient now the public pressure is off them. What is unfortunate is that the pressure that was on video has now been switched to TV. This is potentially a lot more controversial since video was young and defenceless when it was attacked, so not many people cared about the removal of films from the shelves. Everyone, however, watches television, and everyone has their favourite shows. It is particularly amusing to read letters in the tabloids which start off "I think it is appalling the violence shown on TV these days" yet end with "..but to cancel episodes of my favourite show MIAMI VICE is ridiculous and irritating!" These people only seem to complain about programmes they don't watch, not realising that if one goes, they all must go. The same arguments are being raked over for TV censorship as for video a few years ago. However, their novelty value has worn a bit thin of late, after all, nobody did find a direct link between the Zeebrugge Ferry disaster and that terrific slaughter film THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE, although I suspect a few of the passengers had seen it and unwittingly rolled the ferry.

It is of course redundant to say that films on TV are a complete waste of time, ITV being the worst offender by far. Often screening the American TV versions they remove all dodgy language and sometimes replace whole scenes with banal dialogue. Anyone unfortunate to view GHOSTBUSTERS last Christmas will readily testify how such un-necessary interference can destroy a film. Interestingly, it is only the bad language that is removed, somewhat hypocritically bearing in mind a lot of what is broadcast. THE THING for instance, was complete with bursting dogs; chesty mouths and walking heads.

I'm not going to repeat what has already been gone into in great detail about the double standards in the media concerning violence in films and violence in their own news coverage, but I will dwell on one subject. Although the papers like to draw strong links between what people see, and what they do, it did'nt put them off full and wholly glorifying coverage of Hungerford, advertising to any waiting gun-freak that fame may just be a trigger away. (Come on Richard, I think you're assuming that people who buy such tabloids can actually read! -Ed) To be honest I can't think of any horror fan I know who's obsessed by artillery, and conversely, one friend who is heavily into military weapons can't bear to watch horror films.. .maybe I should avoid him in the future?

There is one last point I'd like to make and I feel it is the most important point of all, and one that I frequently use to shut people up when they attack horror films. I like to think that I have a very clear perception of reality, apart from Friday nights that is when I find the carpet dragon makes excellent conversation but I digress, I know what is right in this world, and what is wrong, and can discuss at length issues of conscience and morals at intelligent levels. My argument is this, films, are not real, they are fiction, works of imagination, thought up by often very nice, respectable people who have a job to do. They have not actually happened, and are not about to happen, they are escapist, fantasy, and there is no doubt about that. They are not to be taken seriously, and not to be believed. If MPs; NVLA members and moral crusaders cannot accept that fact, then maybe it is they who should be worried about. Maybe they are the ones who confuse fiction with reality and in their attempts to cover up their own inadequacies they feel they should drag everyone else down as well. It's just a thought, but everyone I've written to, read about and seen connected with the horror genre seem to be really nice, intelligent people, whereas the likes of Whitehouse are obviously interferring old bags with some axe to grind which she does to everyone's irritation.

I certainly know who I like to be associated with.



THIS IS BAD FOR YOU? -'THE EVIL DEAD'.

NEXT ISSUE: Richard dons his mum's outfit and heads off in the search of THE SOUND OF MUSIC, as he begins his year long stay in the general region of Switzerland, where he'll be dining on a mixture of uncut carnage and cheap beer! The next bunch of CRYPT's will therefore have an international flavour, and quite possibly a series of photos of Richard standing alongside the sites of some of the most famous ski-ing disasters of recent years! Be here!

HORROR MARKET

FOR SALE: Horror and general film posters, including FRIDAY THE 13TH V, THE GATE, EVIL DEAD II, DEMON OF PARADISE etc. SAE for lists to: MARK STEVENS, 141 MONTAGUE RD, RUGBY, WARWICKS, CV22 6LR.

VHS ORIGINALS FOR SALE, Many titles to choose from, prices start at £5.00 Enclose SAE
M.KENNAN, 5 PINFOLD CLOSE, COCKERMOUTH, CUMBRIA, CA13 9JW.

FOR SALE: VHS originals. ZOMBIE HOLOCAUST (£15), DAWN OF THE MUMMY (£15), TEXAS CHAINSAW (U/C) (£30), EVIL DEAD (X certificate) (£75).
JOE DESANTIS, 9 CHAPEL LANE, STANION, KETTERING, NORTHANTS, NN14 1HE.

FOR SALE: Horror/sci-fi magazines/fanzines, including Fangoria, Cinefantastique and Starburst. SAE for list.
ROGER BIRCHALL, 3(a) THISTLEWAITE RD, CLAPTON, LONDON E5 OQG

WANTED: VHS original of POOR WHITE TRASH.
LES DALE, 43 HORNBEAM CRESC, BRENTFORD, MIDDX, TW8 9NE

WANTED: Any rare, unusual 50s sci-fi monster movies, also a copy of the John Waters book SHOCK VALUE.
NICK CAIRNS, 29 WESTLAND AVE, HUCKNALL, NOTTINGHAM, NG15 6FW

WANTED: VHS originals only of CREEPSHOW, CRAZIES, KNIGHTRIDERS, MARTIN, TEXAS CHAINSAW, DREAMSCAPE, ZOMBIE FLESHEATERS etc. Write DAVID BROCK, 52 FARCROFT DRIVE, MARKET DRAYTON, SHROPSHIRE, TF9 3HB.

The Fanzine Scene.

by JOHN MARTIN

BLEEDER'S DIGEST (50p & POSTAGE, 63 GEOFFREY ST, CHORLEY, LANCS, PR6 0HF).

Paul Higson's BLEEDER'S DIGEST continues in its amateur, spiky anarchic style. See 5 exclusive interviews with Norman J Warren and Hayden and Fraser Pearce, part one of an impressive Karloff retrospective and part 2 of a guide to new horror stars. If you're the kind of clever dick who can identify the film that contained that immortal line "If the house is filled with dread, place the beds head to head" then buy B.D. and you'll find yourself being addressed by someone who's as obsessive as you are. If you can't identify the film, then buy B.D. and stop being such an ignoramus, ok?

RAW VIRUS (60p. 30 VICAR ST, WEDNESBURY, W.MIDS, WS10 9HF)

Nigel Bartlett's 'TERROTECH'' was one of the first wave of fanzines that followed in the wake of 'SAMHAIN', but after 5 issues it folded and Nigel became an enigmatic figure, virtually disappearing from view. Now he's back with RAW VIRUS and a welcome return it is. Packed into its 20 pages are the usual hyper-enthusiastic write-ups of the scummiest Italian, Spanish and Phillipines horrors around, the highlight being a profile of Nige's main man John Morghen. Also Mike Slater on the SNUFF controversy and yours truly on feeble Fly dick-stomper AL NO COMMIDA. Nice to have you back Nige, this time don't stay away so long.

PIECES OF MARY (50p. 51 GORSEY LEA, BURNTWOOD, WALSALL, W.MIDS, WS7 7ED).

Gareth James' PIECES OF MARY is the only periodical I know of that is devoted to horror fiction. Curiously, the only doubts I have about this one are to do with the illustrations, which are starting to look a bit over-familiar. But it would be churlish to make too much of this, considering how much Gareth achieves on miniscule resources. Though constantly teetering on the brink of extinction, PIECES consistently features interviews with the biggest names in the field- James Herbert; Ramsey Campbell; Shaun Hutson; Graham Masterton and Ian Watson have all been happy to submit to the third degree at Gareth's hands and Hutson has even contributed original fiction! This guy has very definite opinions on what makes for good and bad horror, and also on censorship. PIECES' heart is in the right place and Gareth's tireless efforts deserve better reward than a non-stop struggle for survival.

THE CREEPING UNKNOWN (50p. 29 WESTLAND AVE, HUCKNALL, NOTTINGHAM, NG15 6FW).

Started life as GUARDIAN OF THE BAT-PISS, er I mean ABYSS, this is the responsibility of Nick Cairns and Catherine and is a quirky, off-beat zine that mixes jokey graphics and the weirdest cuttings from Nick's archives with serious articles on e.g. censorship; re-titling of films on video; and the career of John Waters (well, as serious as you can get on that subject!). The authoritative tone of these features derives from Nick's contacts in the industry. He and Catherine are still making up their minds about the balance between the amusing and informative stuff, but continuing obsessions include Cath's lust for Clive Barker and the heaping of abuse at the hapless Bob and his girlfriend Tracey. Expect the upcoming fourth issue to include observations on the mythical (I hope) Umberto Lenzi fan club and the day Cath met Billy Corkhill in Lime St station. One of my favourite things about this one though, is that they always say nice things about me. Hey you guys, the feeling's mutual!

and JOHN HILL.

IMAGINATOR (60p. BEARES HOUSE, KINGSHILL RD, FOUR ASHES, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP13 5RB).

Ken Miller, the editor of this mag should really change his address, it takes bloody ages to write his current one out! However, his actual zine in the space of two issues and become one of the top 5 zines on the go (I'll let you decide who the others are, but naturally I'm biased!) and how he can publish 38 printed sides for a miserable 60p & postage is beyond me! Contents include loads reviews, articles by Ken on such as 'eco horrors', and best of all so far, issue 2's listing of favourite horror films, compiled from the world's horror experts, well fanzine editors at least! Yes, read the top tens of Chas Balun, Tony Timpone, John Gullidge, Stefan Jaworzyn and well me too! Oh and the top five thousand of Paul Higson. Invaluable stuff, and a force to be reckoned with in the future.

HI-TECH TERROR (ABOUT 6 DOLLARS FOR A LOAD OF ISSUES. P.O. BOX 5367, KINGWOOD, TX 77325. U.S.A.)

Editor Craig Ledbetter is a genuinely nice guy, and in this monthly newsletter, makes no secret of his admiration for the European gore movie. Consistently interesting for its ultra-obscure material which we never see over here, HTT is well thought of amongst horror fans, hence its ability to get contributions from such professional writers as Donald Farmer, Tim Ferrante, Kris Gilpin etc. Purely a review format, with nuggets of news on forthcoming releases, the latest issue, no. 33, does however boast a great piece on the UK fanzine scene in which Craig praises the efforts of we Brits, and a nice plug for WS too. Well worth a look.

THE GOREFEST (15 DOLLARS FOR A 10 ISSUE SUBSCRIPTION, 10026 HAWKINS CT, INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46229 USA)

Rod Zimms used to write for THE SPLATTER TIMES (now back on the scene itself), but during its break in publication set up this his own horror newsletter. Though the term newsletter, usually sums up images of unreadable photocopies stapled together, this offering is far superior, being well printed, and professionally laid out, though the lack of stills was a regrettable omission. But the volume of text makes up for this with reviews of new cinema releases, and more so those American video releases that we never get the opportunity to view. Rod will hopefully be supplying further reviews to this zine, his first being his critique of THE SERPENT AND THE RAINBOW this issue. In the meantime, why not send off for a sub to his own publication?

ABSURD (60p. 12 UNION RD, WARDLE, ROCHDALE, LANCS, OL12 9QA)

Ian Caunce, the editor of this sparkling brand new zine, has been a reader of WS since we started, so I feel a tiny bit responsible for this one, which is fine, for there is nothing to be ashamed of, especially if you are looking for something a little bit out of the ordinary, for it covers the real obscure subject matter. A real education this, with articles on lesser known Hammer B movies, Mexican wrestlers, and a page devoted to Karloff and Lugosi. The price seems a bit steep, but it works out worth it for page after page of stills and files you won't have seen before. Oh and Ian, I promise to return those videos shortly!

COLD SWEAT (85p. 10 CROWBOROUGH RD, SOUTHEND ON SEA, ESSEX, SS2 6LP).

Trevor Barley deserves some sort of award for standing up to SHOCK XPRESS dictator Stefan Jaworzyn in print, and then going on to crucify CRIMSON CELLULOID'S David Bolte for speaking out of turn! C.S. itself continues to be offbeat in content, issue 3 for example includes a lengthy piece on real-life psychos with particular credit being given to Jack the Ripper, and to pad the issue out there's an investigation into the Sunday Sport sex hotlines, a bit on MIDGE and some geezer named Richard Griffiths on how not to order from abroad.

SHEER FILTH (50p. 35 HOLLY ST, OFFERTON, STOCKPORT, SK1 4DP).

David Flint's wonderfully tasteless effort continues steadily, at a rate of one issue every now and then, but the wait is worth it for this is rapidly becoming one of the UK's top zines. I can't confess to being a 100% sleaze addict, but this one really appeals to me (probably why I write for it?) with its wild mix of sleaze, exploitation, horror and porn, and when possible, a combination of the lot! David says nice things about us, so hell, we like him too! Some of the photos get a bit dodgy every now and then (take a close look at the still on page 11 of the third issue!) but on the whole, highly recommended stuff!

SHOCK XPRESS (£1.25 109 SEPTEMBER WAY, STANMORE, MIDDX, HA7 2SP).

SHOCK XPRESS gets pretty mixed reactions from the average UK fan, especially from the zine editors it consistently slags off, when's it our turn Stefan? However, the truth is that SX is without rival as a horror periodical, no other mag, pro or amateur comes close to covering the genre with the professionalism and knowledge that these guys utilise. The nations top authorities- Kim Newman, Ramsey Campbell and various rejects from the heyday of STARBURST, consistently cover not only all the new releases but a large quantity of obscure oldies that have previously passed unnoticed. Highly recommended, and if you pick up SX for the first time, turn straight to the letters page to find some of the hottest insults currently in use, and Stefan's regular attacks at the tory ideals this nation is flooded with, proves he has his heart in the right place. Don't delay, subscribe today! and if Stefan ever slags off WS, then everything I just wrote was a total lie!

SEVERED SEGMENTS.

GOINGS ON IN THE WORLD OF FRIGHTFUL ENTERTAINMENT

Dario Argento's OPERA has not proved to be the mainstream success he was looking for, it opened to poor reviews here in Italy. As usual the movie is high on technical flair, with great camera-work, like the scene where the flight of a raven is simulated (though look out for the shadow of the camera!), but the story is very stupid. A strange thing happened with the marketing of the film, in the first days of release OPERA was shown uncut (with an 18 certificate, the equivalent of the US 'X' certificate) and banned to minors under that age, but was soon after lowered to the minors of 14 ('R') but the splatter stuff was edited out. Apparently there is quite a lot of difference between the two versions.

Lucio Fulci has reportedly started ZOMBI 3, though not in 3D as first intended. There is some confusion as to what stage the film is in, some say it is completed, others state it is still in pre-production, though one thing is for certain, the plot, which has a toxic cloud turning people into flesh-eating zombies which sounds pretty boring and very deja-vu.

DEMONS 3 is set for an Autumn release here, this time the demons will attack an airplane, I wonder where the nasty little guys will appear from? I hope its not from the plane's cinema screen, though it seems the end will see the aircraft falling into a volcano! Again directed and produced by Lamberto Bava and Dario Argento respectively.

One new film that has opened to great controversy is LA VISIONE DEL SABBA, which is directed by Marco Bellocchio, though not exactly a horror film it seems worthy of mention. It's the story of a girl during the witchfinder period, who is assumed to be, of course, a witch. There's sex, violence and plentiful torture, which listening to what some of the actresses say, is not fake! Looks interesting huh? The actress Raffaella Rossellini reported that during the making of the film she was allegedly raped, half-drowned and beaten. All this makes me recall the news reports about a girl forced to eat shit while filming SALO 120 DAYS OF SODOM or the girl who was forced to have sex with a goat in Brass' CALIGULA (the uncut version is out on video here). Returning to LA VISIONE DEL SABBA (SABBATH'S VISION?) I did see some scenes of this at Mifed, and it appeared very much along the lines of MARK OF THE DEVIL.

Finally, a quick word about the new Ruggero Deodato movie, which stars Donald Pleasance, Michael York and Edwige Fenech (yum, yum!). It is entitled UN DELITTO POCO COMUNE (AN UNCOMMON CRIME) and from the trailers being shown it seems pretty gory with various throat-slicings.

— MAX DELLA MORA.

IMMINENTE A MILANO
«Soltanto una strega ci può salvare.»
ACHILLE MANZOTTI presenta
un film di MARCO BELLOCCHIO
LA VISIONE DEL SABBA

One of the most off-beat releases of the year looks set to be KILLER KLOWNS FROM OUTER SPACE, directed by Stephen Chiodo, who along with his two brothers, previously worked on the effects of such as CRITTERS and ROBOCOP. KILLER KLOWNS is a unique variation of the alien invasion genre, which features some wild special effects, and if you want a preview of the film, check out a current EV video release, which are carrying a great ad for the movie. Speaking of EV, they also have the rights to PRISON, which we covered last issue, this is one of Empire's best productions, with some very atmospheric direction from Finnish film-maker Renny Harlin, and anyone who saw his previous film ARCTIC HEAT which had Chuck Norris' young lad, Mike, and his pals getting thrown into a Soviet prison, will understand just why he was chosen to film PRISON. Next up for Harlin, is the prestigious job of helming A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET IV, which should prove very interesting.

That other never-ending horror series, FRIDAY THE 13TH opened for the seventh time in the States in May (May the 13th of course), the latest installment in the saga was shot by John Buechler, whose CELLAR DWELLER is trashed in our review section. Anyone who has seen a recent issue of Fangoria, will notice Jason is looking decidedly worse for wear this time around, with exposed rib-cage, and decomposed head! Apparently set six years after the last film, when Jason was tied down in the lake, you'll remember, and therein lies an interesting statistic, if, the first film was set in the present day (i.e. 1980 when it was shot), then each successive sequel appears to have skipped about half a dozen years, which by the time of part 7, should surely have the proceedings set in the 21st century!?! Any reader who can work out the exact year should write in, and I'll sort out some sort of a prize, though you should provide evidence of your estimate.

FRIDAY THE 13TH, like it or loathe it, is certainly helping to keep the slaughter movie alive, so is Kirk Alex, an independent film-maker who's new film LUNCHMEAT, has caused quite a stir among US horror fans, in a recent issue of The Gorefest Ned Simms called it a "genuine classic". A tale of a family of psychotics, it is apparently in the TEXAS CHAINSAW school of film-making, though LUNCHMEAT boasts more than its fair share of graphic violence, it is therefore unlikely to see a UK release in anything like a complete form, we will however be covering the whole movie next issue.

Those who enjoyed our profile on Ted V Mikels last issue, will be interested to learn that he is one of several independent film-makers to be featured in a new Channel 4 series come August the 5th. The Incredibly Strange Film Show, will be hosted by none other than Jonathan Ross (don't let that put you off, this is a guy who has interviewed the likes of Clive Barker, Shaun Hutson, John Waters and David Lynch on his talk show), and among the other directors to be covered will be Sam Raimi; Frank Henenlotter; Russ Meyer, Ray Dennis Steckler; H G Lewis; and John Waters. Sounds promising huh?

Finally, news of a few fanzines that arrived after I did the round-up on page 19.

SAMHAIN (£1.25. 19 ELM GROVE ROAD, TOPSHAM, EXETER, DEVON,
EX3 0EQ).

Aren't those new coloured covers neat? The latest issue (9), just goes to show why this is the UK's best-selling fanzine with 32 pages of superior work, including a lengthy section on Hammer, interviews with H R Giger and Nancy Allen, Kirk Alex on his own film, LUNCHMEAT, plus the usual reviews and stuff, a great MONSTER SQUAD cover too.

GOREZILLA (1000 LIRE, about 25p, but send some postage.
PIAZZA TRIPOLI 7 - 20146 MILANO, ITALY)

A new fanzine from good old Max Della Mora, who appears to have something to do with most UK fanzines, including this one. Appears to be a [illegible] version of SHEER FILTH, though as I can't read Italian I'm afraid I can't comment upon the type but it looks interesting stuff. I see we're mentioned, Max please give me a translation!

DARK MOVIES (A flyer should get an issue or two, from BEIM-
BEINGASSE 44, 2324 SCHWECHAT- RANNERSDORF, AUSTRIA)

Big, and I mean big (56 A4 pages!) fanzine by Harald Dolezal, and yet again in a foreign language which once again I can't decipher, still, this is interesting for the large selection of stills, and particularly the European posters. A new issue (4) is just out, including Henenlotter; Ridley Scott; freaks; Alien movies and more. Harald even sent me a free still from WOLFEN, what a nice guy! Oh, and issue 3, includes a still of Meg Ryan, so it must be worth buying!

MUSCLEING IN ON THE ACTION

a special feature by JOHN HILL

PT. 2: THE RUNNING MAN.

USA 1987 DIRECTED BY: PAUL MICHAEL GLASER
STARRING ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER; MARIA CONCHITA ALONSO; YAPHET KOTTO, RICHARD DAWSON; JESSE VENTURA; ERLAND VAN LIDTH

I know that last issue I promised to cover ROBOCOP in this, part two of our look at the recent spate of violent action movies, but since then, I've managed to see this film, and have decided to cover it as it is the more topical, besides, if we do ROBOCOP next time round, it will nicely coincide with the film's video release.

On to THE RUNNING MAN though, the latest maybe blockbuster to star that cinematic giant (in every respect of the phrase) Arnold Schwarzenegger, and as I commented last issue, whilst covering PREDATOR, these Hollywood hunks are straying further into the fantastic, this being a good case in point, for THE RUNNING MAN is very much science fiction, yet with healthy elements of horror too. Not too surprising really, since the film is based (very, very loosely if truth be told) on Stephen King's story, entitled, of all things, 'The Running Man', though the film does credit the story to Richard Bachman, which is of course the pseudonym that King wrote the original story under.

As the popular expression goes, it is the near future, the world's financial markets have collapsed, precious commodities like oil and food are very sparse, and all media output is censored and controlled by a corrupt government. It is indeed a pretty bleak future, and into all this turmoil flies Ben Richards (Schwarzenegger) a cop who is ordered to open fire from his helicopter gunship, on the rioting crowds below, who in actual fact are starving citizens queuing for food. Naturally, being a heroic and wholesome sort, Ben (macho name huh?) refuses his order, and for his troubles is beaten and thrown into a work camp for eighteen months. The action then naturally skips to the said camp, where Ben with his pals (including Yaphet Kotto in another token role) plan their escape, and indeed succeed, but not before various guards and escapees are gunned down and one poor sod has his head detonated... and all this before the opening credits finish! After a brief time of freedom, Richards is re-captured, but not by the authorities, but by the powers that be, behind the nation's most popular TV show, 'The Running Man', a barbaric gameshow where various disposables (i.e. criminals) are given the golden opportunity of freedom, but only if they can survive their hunters, an elaborate mob, called the stalkers, each a sadistic, hulking brute with their own fancy stage name (Dynamo; Subzero; Buzzsaw etc) and their own method of slaughter. Chosen against his will Ben is thrown into the action as the next contestant in an attempt to pick up further ratings (As the programme's head points out, "TV's not about people, it's about ratings!"). Labelled the 'Butcher of Bakersfield' and unjustly implicated as the perpetrator of the attack on the food crowd, which we of course know he's innocent of, though the audience are conned with a corruptly edited videotape of his supposed crimes, Ben is given the same chance as any other contestant - survive and go free!

Herein the film centers around the gameshow as Ben, aided and abetted by his two buddies, desperately attempt to stay alive as a seemingly endless barrage of sinister opponents is pitted against them. The main asset of the gameshow though, is that it is not set in a wrestling ring in a studio, but the contestants are whizzed off in rocket propelled cars to dank and deserted regions of the city, all the while being pursued by the stalkers, and monitored by remote-control cameras. So, can Ben possibly survive? Will he finally be able to clear his name? Can he manage to show the viewing audience the truth about their favourite show, and the unspeakable corruption that sweeps the whole of the media? Well as the film doesn't open here until later in the year I won't give too much away, but let's face it, when have you ever seen Arnie lose a battle?

THE RUNNING MAN was a very troubled production, the film went through three directors (George Pan Cosmatos (RAMBO); Andrew Davis (THE FINAL TERROR) and finally Glaser), and its budget spiralled up to a reported 28 million dollars, it was also delayed from opening in the States last Summer, apparently because Schwarzenegger did not want it to clash with (and get shown up by?) PREDATOR. Production catastrophes aside, the film is actually pretty good, not great, it's too much old hat for that, but pretty good.

The basic plot can hardly be described as a new one, the violent sport, spectacle storyline has been around for a pretty long time, Norman Jewison's ROLLERBALL with James Caan as the hero of a brutal hockey game was one of the first films to show the idea as being a profitable one. Successful films encourage others, and Roger Corman's jolly spin-off DEATH RACE 2000 came next with its great exploitation cast (remember that young Sylvester Stallone in there?) and cheesy and cheerful tale of the trans-American road race where points are gathered for the amount of roadkill achieved on the journey. Italy were there of course with their own rip-offs of the idea, such as D'Amato's ENDGAME and Fulci's ROME 2033: THE FIGHTER CENTURIONS (which Griffiths covered in 'Crypt of Terror' last issue) and surprisingly it is this film which bears most resemblance to RUNNING MAN, for not only does it have the spectacle of the violent sport, but it is also involved with the attempt of a TV station to bolster ratings by showing such stuff. Coincidence or not? Could this be the first time Lucio Fulci can file a lawsuit or is he still paying out to George Romero for ZOMBIE FLESHEATERS? Oh who cares, we seem to be getting sidetracked. But it is odd that Hollywood has gone full circle on itself, but in actual fact, THE RUNNING MAN is a lot more than just a big budget rip-off, it is also a fine action film, a comic-book exercise in violence and most importantly a satire and vicious swipe at the world of television and the manipulative effect on its viewing audience.

Though the actual scenario of 'The Running Man' TV show is a game show format, the real victim of its satirical stab is the wrestling world, in fact several of the formidable stalkers are played by real-life wrestlers (Jesse Ventura; Professor Toru Tanaka), and just look at that studio audience, almost entirely made up of little old ladies, all screeching with delight when their favourite stalker is chosen to compete. The film's comedy elements aren't always subtle, Schwarzenegger delivers his usual one liners, but I couldn't help but giggle when a little old lady in the studio audience is asked her opinion on Ben Richards, replying "that boy is one bad motherfucker".

Where the film does succeed though is in the actual confrontations between Ben and the stalkers and though I was disappointed by the consummate ease with which Ben does in his adversaries, but at least it gives the opportunity to face more of them. The actual stalkers are the film's highpoint, a stunning selection of wrestlers, athletes and bodybuilders, all of whom make Schwarzenegger look positively anorexic, no mean feat. Each stalker has his own characteristic, such as the guy who dresses up in hockey outfit complete with razor-edged stick and explosive pucks. Then there's Buzzsaw, who rides into battle astride his motorbike, whilst striking at victims with his chainsaw (the battle between him and Ben being very reminiscent of the skirmish in MAD MAX BEYOND THUNDERDOME, but this one does have the gore pay-off, and the one scene in a film this year that will have every male in the audience cringing in sympathy...you guessed it, Buzzsaw gets his saw blade thrust between his legs!). Best of all though is Dynamo, portrayed by the colossal Erland Van Lidth as an opera singing roman gladiator in a lightbulb suit that fires bolts of electricity! There is some genuine invention and great imagination amongst these characters.

So, how to sum up this offering? Well for starters I don't think any fans of Schwarzenegger or his ilk will be let down by this one, it certainly isn't short on raw action, but as a fantasy film it is nothing new (ROLLERBALL, BLADERUNNER, MAD MAX, ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK all did it before and better too in most instances), but it's none the worse for that. The various production difficulties probably dented the overall impact of the film, but as it stands, it ain't too bad, you could do a lot worse, though the swipe at corrupt authorities was handled better in ROBOCOP but as an over the top slice of gratuitous mayhem, THE RUNNING MAN will do nicely.

FILM REVIEWS.

HOWLING III (USA /AUSTRALIA 1986) 2

DIRECTED BY PHILLIPE MORA. STARRING IMOGEN ANNESLEY.

After the fiasco that was HOWLING II, director Phillipe Mora screamed bloody murder, and exclaimed severe studio interference, well fair enough, but he's going to have to come up with a better excuse to defend this debacle, for if possible, HOWLING III is even worse than its predecessor!

Not only is the film technically inept (the hip-up wolf suits are among the worst ever used in a film), but the plot is so loopy that even the serious bits are hysterical. Imagine if you will, a new breed of human, a marsupial human, complete with pouch, and the ability to turn into wolves, but ones resembling the extinct Tasmanian tiger. Next imagine a young girl of said clan getting lost in Sydney, getting romantically involved with and impregnated by a young lad, and being cast in a cheapo film, then getting examined by baffled scientists, escaping and finally giving birth kangaroo-style to a furry embryonic offspring. You can't imagine that? Well someone did, and the result is this dire exercise.

The film does have several firsts, such as the first werewolf birth scene, the first belly dancing lycanthrope and to my knowledge the first werewolf nun (readers are advised to correct me on any of these). God knows what is supposed to be happening at the end of the film, we seem to skip fifteen years, yet Dame Edna Everage is still about, yup Barry Humphries in his antipodean housewife guise puts in an appearance..pretty terrific huh?

HOWLING III is a shambles in every respect, the comic moments are handled with all the subtlety of a horny rhino, take for example the film within a film piss-take of AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON, entitled "It came from Uranus" The serious moments are even worse, and dramatic birth scene is nothing of the sort, being a cross between National geographic and the Sooty show! What's most disappointing about HOWLING III, is that Mora admitted that his first effort was garbage, yet still went ahead and sucked this up too, though such films as A BREED APART and DEATH OF A SOLDIER prove him a talented director, obviously he just doesn't have a clue about horror.

Avoid, I wouldn't even wish this on completists.

JOHN HILL.

AMAZON WOMEN ON THE MOON (USA 1987) CIC. 7

DIRECTED BY JOHN LANDIS, JOE DANTE, ROBERT K WEISS, CARL GOTTLIEB PETER HORTON. STARRING 'LOTS OF ACTORS'.

Hilarious late night compilation job from Landis and his mates. A selection of sketches that range from the ok to the hilarious, though the majority stray towards the latter thankfully.

Highlights include, 'Bullshit or not' in which Henry Silva desperately tries to keep a straight face whilst investigating the possibility that Jack the Ripper was in fact the Loch Ness Monster then there's a vicious swipe at film critics by ex-critic Dante, the world's best selection of tasteless corpse jokes than eaten in a funeral sketch. In fact there are so many high points it's difficult to pick the best, though Ben 'Mr Soul' Simmonds raises a hearty laugh with each appearance, and the linking theme of the "1953 science-fiction classic, AMAZON WOMEN ON THE MOON" is spot on too.

A high quota of nubile, and naked women too (including DEATH-STALKER 2's Monique Gabrielle) for those that way inclined. Look out for Russ Meyer towards the end.

About the best fun you can have on a Friday night without getting arrested.

ELMER FUDPUCKER.

NEAR DARK (USA 1987) EV 9

DIRECTED BY KATHRYN BIGELOW. STARRING ADAM PASDAR; JENNY WRIGHT; LANCE HENRIKSEN; JENETTE GOLDSTEIN; BILL PAXTON; JOSHUA MILLER.

"A searching story of bloodthirsty vampires" said the cinema programme. With only that to go on, since publicity has been rather coy about this film, I thought I'd pop along to the local fleapit to check out this latest offering in the re-emergence of the vampire movie.

NEAR DARK is so good that the horror genre is in grave danger of gaining back some of the respectability it has lost in recent years. The story concerns a group of the undead who rest by day, and kill by night, sunlight causes them to blister and burn if it touches the skin. Whilst visiting a country home, a local farm boy is infected by a love bite before being left to find his way home in the dark. However, as dawn breaks, he becomes increasingly ill, and just in sight of his house, the vampire troupe kidnap him in a blacked-out van. His father (Tim "Dry hair's for squids" Thomerson) witnesses this and sets off in pursuit with his sulky pie daughter.

The rest of the film concerns the fathers search, and the boy coming to terms with his newly acquired vampire status, whilst attempting to become accepted by the rest of the group and falling in love with the girl who first infected him. In one superb scene the group fall on a remote pub and proceed to kill the occupants in a slow and casual manner while the remaining few can do nothing but watch and wait their turn.

The usual vampire rules do not apply here, there's no mention of garlic; crucifixes; holy water; bats or coffins, i.e. none of the more fanciful vampire myths. However, they do have superhuman strength, cannot be killed (they are all repeatedly shot in one scene) and of course have the mentioned aversion to sunlight.

NEAR DARK is 95% shot at night, providing a very brooding atmosphere, and is exceptionally stylishly filmed. The effects are all excellent and genuinely integrated into the plot. My only gripe is the reasoning behind the "cure" the father thought up, still you can't have style and complete plot coherence, hey, ask the Italians.

RICHARD GRIFFITHS.

HELLO MARY LOU : PROM NIGHT 2 (CANADA 1987) SHELR 7

DIRECTED BY BRUCE PITTMAN. STARRING WENDY LYON; LISA SCHRAGE; MICHAEL IRONSIDE, JUSTIN LOUIS.

At times one could be forgiven for getting the feeling that HELLO MARY LOU : PROM NIGHT 2 (an unlikely title, its original, the Haunting of Hamilton High, was more sensible) is nothing more than an elaborate in-joke. With references and borrowings to and from numerous horror luminaries and films, HELLO MARY LOU, could have easily become irritating and tired. Fortunately though, this never happens due to a reasonably inventive and interesting script by Ron Oliver who manages to make the characters and situations sympathetic and diverting. There are also a wide spectrum of special effects all of which work well and certainly stop the film from becoming predictable. Director Pittman does a credible job too and comes up with a number of entertaining scenes and set-pieces to keep everything moving along at a brisk pace.

The plot itself is really not very original, with bitchy prom queen Mary Lou Maloney being burned to death in an accident back in 1957, and then returning from beyond the grave to possess young Vicky Carpenter (played well by Wendy Lyon) and seek revenge on those she holds responsible for her untimely demise.

The presence of the excellant Michael Ironside is a big plus but he never really has enough to do, although his final contribution at the film's conclusion is great stuff! Also Lisa Schrage as the abominable Mary Lou gives an effective performance and Paul Zaza's main theme is good atmospheric stuff and really should have been used in the film itself. The various character names including, Carpenter; Romero; Dante and King are not obtrusive and it would seem quite certain that inspiration for the film came from such as CARRIE; THE EXORCIST; and EVIL DEAD to name a few.

On the whole, though, this is an enjoyable excursion into the world of supernatural terror, even if it leaves you with the impression that something rather better could have been produced from these elements, but maybe that's just being greedy!

MARK BUCKLEY.

CELLAR DWELLER (USA 1987) EV 4

DIRECTED BY JOHN BEUCHLER. STARRING JEFFREY COMBS; VINCE EDWARDS; YVONNE DECARLO; PAMELA BELLWOOD, CHERYL ANN WILSON.

Yet another video quickie from Uncle Chas Band surfaces with familiar faces, familiar director, and even more familiar monster. Trusty Jeffrey Combs turns up in the pre-credit sequence as a cartoon writer living in a lonely house drawing his latest creation, the 'Cellar Dweller'. Before you can gasp 'TROLL!' up pops said monster and enacts the comic strip which unfortunately involves the death of Jeffrey.

30 years later, the place is a select art college, catering for a curiously small number of rather adult students (including Dynasty's Pam Bellwood) looked over by the menacing Yvonne DeCarlo who you will have no doubt instantly forgotten after HIDE AND SHRIEK. A new student, after the customary bitching session, decides to resurrect the cartoon 'Cellar Dweller' and, in doing so, guess what happens? A few splashes of gore later, most people are dead and our main girl discovers, what we all knew from the beginning, that whatever is drawn, happens. Will she do the honest thing? Does anyone give a damn?

Actually CELLAR DWELLER is not that bad and is fairly typical of Empire's NTV output, the monster is quite nifty and Buechler's direction is par for the course. What really irritated me was the disgracefully short running time, about 70 minutes of action does not a film make. If Empire expect to do well at the box office, no matter what the film, it's got to be longer than just over an hour. That said, the plot has nowhere to go and could have worked far better as a 30 minute episode of an anthology.

RICHARD GRIFFITHS.

ANGELHEART (USA 1986) GUILD 9

DIRECTED BY ALAN PARKER. STARRING MICKEY ROURKE; ROBERT DE NIRO; LISA BONET; CHARLOTTE RAMPLING.

I make no secret of my admiration for Parker's films, MIDNIGHT EXPRESS and BIRDY are held in very high esteem in my eye, and are now joined by this exceptional supernatural thriller.

Rourke in his best performance yet is the private eye hired by DeNiro to find a missing crooner name of Johnny Favourite who disappeared without paying off his debts many years ago.

Who is Favourite? Why do all Rourke's investigations turn up a grisly corpse? Why are DeNiro's finger nails so pointed? All these questions and more are answered in this very fine film. As ever for Parker's films, it seems to have set off a row of controversy though pretty unmerited here, there's nothing to offend the hardened horror campaigner.

What you do get for your money though are stylish direction, a tight and twisting plot, full of surprises, and exceptional all-round acting, a great example of what can be done with horror used properly, would-be film-makers should take note of this one. One of the years best.

JOHN MILL.

BRAIN DAMAGE (USA 1987) PALACE 8

DIRECTED BY FRANK HENENLOTTER. STARRING RICK HEARST; JENNIFER LOWRY; THEO BARNES; LUCILLE SAINT PETER; KEVIN VAN HENTENRYCK

With one or two exceptions, BRAIN DAMAGE seems to have been shunned by most genre fans, though why is a mystery, for although a flawed film, Henenlotter's follow-up to his classic BASKET CASE has all the trademarks which made the first film such a success.

Elmer is an ancient, singing, dancing, talking brain parasite who one day escapes from his middle-aged keepers, and latches himself onto a young man named Brian (Hearst), and so begins their relationship. As Elmer injects Brian with a luminous blue brain fluid, which takes him into a state hallucinated euphoria, while in return, Brian unwittingly gets Elmer his favourite food, live human brains. While spaced out, Brian is totally out of control and hence is unaware and unable to stop Elmer from munching down on various innocent victims. It's when Elmer breaks the news of his dietry habits to his host, that the relationship starts to crumble, but it's too late for Brian, as he painfully discovers, he is now addicted to Elmer's fluid, and can't be separated from the dictatorial monster. Warning his long suffering girlfriend to keep away, in case he can't stay in control, the partnership heads off in a drug-binge wander of the streets, the killing spree continuing until the mind-blowing finale of the film.

Henenlotter has created a wonderfully off-beat film, with a good sense of humour, I particularly liked the in-joke on BASKET CASE where Kevin Van Hentenryck appears clutching his famous basket, thus gives the impression that both stories are going on at the same time, a nice touch. The only real complaint was the coldness in which Brian's girlfriend is killed, this was a potentially moving scene, but is wasted, leaving a numb feeling. The conclusion too is a little vague, but there was no real happy ending possible.

BRAIN DAMAGE has a lot to offer, and if you have seen it and were initially disappointed, I'd recommend a second viewing, this is too good a film to let slip by.

STEVE CHAMBERS

GHOST HOUSE (ITALY 1987) COLOURBOX 6

DIRECTED BY UMBERTO LENZI. STARRING LARA WENDELL; GREG SCOTT;

Very, very spooky haunted house job from Lenzi (hiding behind his Humphrey Humbert pseudonym) that has a mysterious young girl murdering both her parents back in the 60s. Skip to present day, and a weird radio signal is picked up by an amateur radio enthusiast in Boston (USA I hasten to add -ED) which he and his girlfriend trace to said spooky house, which is currently being used as a stop-over point by a group of travelling youths.

The house is of course haunted by the girl who died in the building, and she has an evil revenge on the louts in some pretty gruesome ways, considering the 18 certificate.

Lenzi makes the most of some atmospheric locations, and although the script isn't up to much, the characters are reasonably engaging for this sort of thing, and there is a well maintained tension and sense of unease throughout the film. Lenzi's directing technique has come a long way since he used to shoot close-ups of castrated dicks in CANNIBAL FEROX, the production values are good, the film looks bigger budget than it actually is.

Though not brilliant, it does have some good moments, and you could do a lot worse (GRAVEYARD DISTURBANCE for example?) though trivia fans may want to see the film to decide whether or not the actual house has anything to do with a rather famous one near a cemetary in an old Lucio Fulci epic.

STEVE CHAMBERS

THE SERPENT AND THE RAINBOW (USA 1987) 7

DIRECTED BY WES CRAVEN. STARRING BILL PULLMAN, CATHY TYSON; ZAKES MOKAE, PAUL WINFIELD.

In the exotic jungles of Haiti, voodoo and induced zombie states are being carried out by the Baby Doc dictatorship to control the people. A pharmaceutical corporation enlists the services of an anthropologist, Dennis Alan. This true scenario is the basis for this new occult thriller from Wes Craven.

Dennis is given the task of bringing back a sample of a drug supposed to induce a zombie state, so the corporation can see if it can be used as a powerful anesthetic in the medical world. The terrorising adventure Dennis carries out is filled with horrific dreams and real-life terror imposed by a voodoo prevailing government leader. THE BELIEVERS tried to be a realistic voodoo thriller last year, but it can't hold a candle against Craven's scary and repulsive thriller. The gore level is kept to a minimum and most of the dynamic special effects are left on nightmares which Craven handles so well. Dennis has many of these after he is dosed in the face with one of the drugs, one particular remarkable scene is when a real-life zombie woman comes to him and a snake pops out of her mouth and grasps Dennis by the throat! There are many live shock scenes and you never know if you're in reality or a dream state. Wes Craven has become a real artist of this form of horror, even if the theme of the movie is considered realistic.

Bill Pullman made a creditable job portraying Dennis and Paul Winfield and Cathy Tyson are also good in their respective roles. The effects work is superior, the plot clever (even after Dennis has a nail driven through his scrotum, he returns a second time to finally get the zombie powder), and Craven is at his best, with a nice budget to work with. A fine effort and the location shooting in Haiti is spectacular.

ROB SIMS.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3.

Dear John,

Many thanks for the latest WS The contents are getting better, I particularly enjoyed the CRYPT OF TERROR. Such wit and style of writing, made reading an orgasmic experience, what a talented....(SNIP! - Ed)
Enjoyed the profile, good move covering "lesser-knowns". I think I'd have thrown up if I read ANOTHER examination of any Argento's work, no matter how many long words per line there were. Also, Phil Scho's bit, a man after my own heart, i.e. let's quit the waffling crap and pretentious and do some fun writing! TCM 2 I enjoyed, but Tobe Hooper in my opinion is about as talented as a lump of meat!
As for the reviews, DEMONS 2 deserved more, WITCHES OF EASTWICK was great, BLUE VELVET, yup, I agree with that THE LAMP was ok, worth more than 2 anyway, and SCARED STIFF should have been retitled BORED STIFF!
Oh, finally got hold of an original NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, and guess what? Yup, my video chewed it up half way through. . my how I laughed! I gave my VCR a damn good talking to and threatened it with a Molly Ringwald movie!
Well that's enough from me,
Richard Griffiths
Shrewsbury/ish.

YES, THANKYOU RICHARD FOR THE CONTINUING ATTEMPT TO TAKE OVER THE ZINE AND COULD THAT COMMENT AT ARGENTO ARTICLES HAVE ANYTHING AT ALL TO DO WITH THIS FOLLOWING BLOKE?

Dear John,

Many thanks for the copies of WS,I was pleasantly surprised at the superior production values of your zine It's a good thing you are willing to voice controversial opinions in your reviews rather than going along with the critical concensus, this has always been a strength of fanzines, and anyone who likes INVASION OF THE BLOOD FARMERS can't be too bad! The biggest problem with the mag is one of the contributors, that Max Jackson who covered KIM NEWMAN is a real wanker . sorry boss! You've mustered some strong illustrations- first to reproduce the OPERA poster You also did well to scoop everyone on PRINCE OF DARKNESS (QUATERMASS AND THE SHIT!) and the FIFER piece was great
As for your musings in 'The Fanzine Scene' as to why there are so many zines around, I would cite the decline of the once great mag, 'starburst'. Also, we at 'samhain' are conceited enough to believe we opened a few people's eyes to what could be done. And whilst blowing our trumpet I would dispute your comment that 'sam' is "at times needlessly intellectual". More specifically, I would dispute the "needlessly", we try to include something for everybody, including the intellectuals Anyway, we appreciate the plug, and I hope you keep up the good work.
Yours,
John Martin,
Thornton, Liverpool.

WELL THANKS VERY MUCH JOHN (IS EVERYONE IN FANDOM CALLED JOHN?) FOR YOUR FORTHRIGHT COMMENTS THE NEEDLESSLY INTELLECTUAL PHRASE WAS AIMED AT STUFF LIKE DETAILED, INTELLECTUAL BREAKDOWNS OF NASTY SHIT LIKE CANNIBAL FILMS, BUT HEY, YOU SAID YOUR REASONS BEHIND THIS, AND THAT'S FINE BY ME, I NEVER MEANT IT AS ACTIVE CRITICISM, MERELY MY OPINION ANYWAY, YOU HAVE HEARD JOHN'S OPINIONS ON THIS ZINE, SO TURN TO THIS ISSUE'S 'FANZINE SCENE' TO SEE HOW HE FEELS ABOUT SOME OTHERS AND NOW A QUICK NOTE FROM,ER,JOHN.

Dear John,

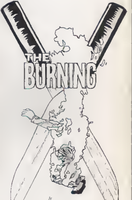
. . . Who the FUCK is Richard Griffiths? He wrote me a letter saying that a lot of what is in SAMHAIN was far too highbrow, and lacking in wit The last thing I want to do is sound like Stefan Jaworzyn, but I really do think Richard should take a good look at his own work before criticising other people's Well, forget I mentioned it, I don't want to fall out with anyone, I just don't think his stuff is as witty as he thinks it is, but then again, he probably thinks the same about ours! Hope to hear from you soon,
John Gullidge,
SAMHAIN,
Exeter, Devon.

REST ASSURED JOHN, YOUR COMMENTS WILL GO NO FURTHER THAN YOU AND I, PROMISE!
(OH WELL, THERE GOES THE FREE ISSUE OF SAMHAIN THIS MONTH, SORRY JOHN, WE STILL LOVE YOU REALLY!)

Dear John,

I feel I must write and complain in the strongest possible terms about the violence in your otherwise excellent publication WHIPLASH SMILE. There's not enough of it, in particular, not nearly enough directed towards Elmer Fudpucker. I suggest a regular photo-strip of Elmer being torn limb from limb, dismembered, abused and generally mistreated as I feel this would make for very interesting reading. As an alternative to this, perhaps it would be a good idea to have a regular series of posters of your good-self posing with various nude female celebrities and film stars.
Yours sinfully,
A.Nutter (address withheld)

EDITOR'S NOTE: WE SINCERELY PROMISE THAT ALL LETTERS PUBLISHED ARE REAL ONES, AND WERE UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES MADE UP TO FILL A BIT OF SPACE. IN REPLY TO THE ABOVE LETTER (WHICH IS MOST DEFINITELY NOT MADE UP) ELMER FUDPUCKER REPLIES:
"TOILET SEATS!"



NEXT ISSUE

WHIPLASH SMILE 5 brings us back to relative normality, with a look at some of the blockbusters of the year, including OPERA, RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD 2 and HELLRAISER 2.
Also the return of the 'Splatter Spot', Mark Hockley on Dan Curtis, Paul Higson on Jennifer Runyon (the lucky sod!) and yet more!

ON SALE MID SEPTEMBER (WITH A BIT OF LUCK!)